

QASASUL AMBIYAA

STORIES OF THE PROPHETS

Maulana Hifzur Rahman Seoharwy (Ra)

QASASUL AMBIYAA

STORIES OF THE PROPHETS

Maulana Hifzur Rahman Seoharwy (Rah.)





www.idaraimpex.com

Qasasul Ambiyaa

(Stories of the Prophets)

By: Maulana Hifzur Rahman Seoharwy (Ra)
Translated by: Maulana Yusuf Karaan



ISBN: 81-7101-424-0

Edition: 2016

TP-471-16

Published by Mohammad Yunus for

IDARA IMPEX

D-80, Abul Fazal Enclave-I, Jamia Nagar
New Delhi-110 025 (India)
Tel.: +91-11-2695 6832 & 085888 33786
Fax: +91-11-6617 3545 Email: **sales@idara.co**
Online Store: **www.idarastore.com**

Retail Shop: **IDARA IMPEX**
Shop 6, Nizamia Complex, Gali Gadrian, Hazrat Nizamuddin
New Delhi-110013 (India) Tel.: 085888 44786

Contents

Preface — 2

Publisher's Foreword — 3

Author's Foreword — 4–6

Tanslator's Foreword — 7

Creation of the Universe — 8–11

The Islãmic Outlook on Scientific Controversies — 12–13

Hazrat Adam ﷺ — 15—31

- The Arguments of Iblees — 15
- Iblees Begs for a Time — 16
- Adam ﷺ, as Khalifa — 17
- The Teaching of Adam ﷺ — 18
- Hawwa's Appearance — 20
- Exit from Paradise — 20
- Adam ﷺ in the Qur'ãn — 21
- Lessons from the Story — 22
- Masa'il Concerning the Story — 23
- Adam (Alaihis Salãm)'s Ismat — 26
- The Angels — 27
- The Jinn — 27
- Iblees (Shaitan) — 27

From the Arranger of this Volume ____ 28
Earth welcomes Adam عليه السلام ____ 29
Qaabil and Haabil ____ 29
Warning ____ 31

Hazrat Nooh عليه السلام ____ 32—41
The First Messenger ____ 32
Call and Disobedience ____ 32
Building the Ark ____ 35
Mount Judy ____ 37
Important Conclusions ____ 37
The Deluge of Nabi Nooh عليه السلام ____ 39
The Flood was it Universal or Local? ____ 40
The Age of Nabi Nooh عليه السلام ____ 41

Hazrat Idrees عليه السلام ____ 42—47
Name and Offspring ____ 42
The Special Qualities ____ 44
Synopsis of His Teachings ____ 44
Future Prophets ____ 45
The Khilafat of Nabi Idrees عليه السلام ____ 45
The Few Special Points ____ 46
The Advices of Nabi Idrees عليه السلام ____ 46

Hazrat Hood عليه السلام ____ 48—57
The People of Aad ____ 48
The Area Inhabited ____ 48
The Religion of Aad ____ 48
Hazrat Nabi Hood عليه السلام ____ 49

The Message of Islãm 49
The Punishment 55
The Death of Nabi Hood ﷺ 56
Lessons 56
The Mention in the Qur'ãn 57

Nabi Saulih ﷺ 58—63
The People of Thamood 58
The Habitat of Thamood 58
The Era of Thamood 58
The Religion of Thamood 59
The Significance of Qur'ãnic Stories 59
The she-camel of Allah 59
The Punishment Over Thamood 62
Warning and Admonition 63

Sayeduna Ibraheem ﷺ 64—93
The Mention in the Qur'ãn 64
Name of the Father 64
Ibraheem ﷺ and the other Prophets 65
The Greatness of Ibraheem ﷺ 65
Preaching to His Father 66
Calling His People 68
Worship of the Stars 69
Invitation to the King 76
The Fire becomes Cold 81
Hijrat towards the Caldia 84
Hijrat towards Palestine 85
Various Masa'il 85

The Position of Hazrat Hajira ____ 88
Nabi Ibraheem (*Alaihis Salãm*)'s Du'as ____ 89
An Important incident of Ibraheem ﷺ ____ 92
Nabi Ibraheem (*Alaihis Salãm*)'s Children ____ 93

Hazrat Ismail ﷺ ____ **94—104**
Birth ____ 94
The Valley of No Vegetation ____ 94
The Ways of a Pious Wife ____ 98
Circumcision ____ 99
The Great Offering ____ 99
Erection of the Kabah ____ 101
Hazrat Ismail's Children ____ 103
The Mention of Ismail's in the Qur'ãn ____ 103
Death of Hazrat Ismail ﷺ ____ 104

Hazrat Ishaaq ﷺ ____ **105—106**
His Birth ____ 105
Circumcision ____ 106
Ishaaq (*Alaihis Salãm*)'s Marriage ____ 106
Ishaaq (*Alaihis Salãm*)'s Mention in the Qur'ãn ____ 106

Hazrat Loot ﷺ ____ **107—119**
Loot and Ibraheem (Alaihimus Salãm) ____ 107
After Returning from Egypt ____ 107
The People of Loot ____ 107
Hazrat Loot ﷺ Conveying the Message ____ 108
Hazrat Ibraheem ﷺ and the Angels ____ 109
Ibraheem ﷺ the Reformer ____ 112
Lessons from the Various Incidents ____ 115

Hazrat Yaqoob ﷺ ______ **120**

Hazrat Yusuf ﷺ ______ **121—140**

Nasab ______ 121
Yusuf (*Alaihis Salãm*)'s Dream and His Brothers ______ 121
The Well of Canaan ______ 123
Yusuf ﷺ into Slavery ______ 123
Yusuf ﷺ and the Wife of Potiphar ______ 124
Yusuf ﷺ in Prison ______ 127
Tableegh in Jail ______ 127
The King's Dream ______ 128
The Period of Famine ______ 131
The Family of Yaqoob ﷺ in Egypt ______ 137
Death of Yusuf ﷺ ______ 138
Matters of Islamic Ethics ______ 138

Hazrat Shuaib ﷺ ______ **141—149**

Madyan and the People of Aikah ______ 141
Invitation to the Truth ______ 142
The Sort of Punishment ______ 147
The Grave of Hazrat Shuaib ﷺ ______ 148
Lessons and Warnings ______ 148
Nabi Shuaib ﷺ in the Qur'ãn ______ 149

Hazrat Musa and Hazrat Haroon (*Alaihimus Salãm*) ______ **150—218**

Bani Israel in Egypt ______ 150
Fir'own ______ 151
Fir'own's Dream ______ 151
Birth of Musa ﷺ ______ 151

Brought up in the House of Fir'own 152
Musa (*Alaihis Salãm*)'s Exit from Egypt 152
Musa (*Alaihis Salãm*)'s Hijrat towards Madyan 155
The Waters of Madyan 155
Marriage to the Daughter of the Shaikh 156
The Sacred Valley 157
Musa ﷺ as Messenger 158

Musa ﷺ Returns to Egypt And Hazrat Haroon ﷺ Receives Prophethood 162

Entry to Egypt 162
Preaching the Truth in Fir'owns Court 163
Haroon (Alaihis Salãm)'s Actions 165
Fir'own's Reaction 165
Haamaan 166
Exhibition in Fir'own's Court 166
The Anxiety of Bani Israel 170
The Reaction of Fir'own 171
The Believing Egyptian 171
Fir'own's Annoucement 173
The Wrath of Allah on the Egyptians 173
Bani Israel's Departure form Egypt 174
Fir'own's Drowning 175
A Great Miracle 177
Fir'own and the Day of Qiyamat 177

Nabi Musa ﷺ and Bani Israel after Crossing the Red Sea 178
Their First Demand 178
Allah's Favours on Bani Israel 179

Manna and Salwa ______ 179
The Shade of Clouds ______ 179
The Ingratitude of Bani Israel ______ 179
Aetikaaf on Mount Toor ______ 180
The Manifestation of Allah ______ 180
The Revelation of the Torah ______ 181
The Worship of the Cow ______ 181
The Pardon of Bani Israel ______ 184
The Appointment of Seventy Chiefs ______ 185
The Obstinacy of the Chiefs and Allah's Punishment ______ 186
Bani Israel's Second Refusal and Mount Toor ______ 187
The Promise of the Holy Land ______ 189
Bani Israel's Disobedience ______ 191
The Demise of Hazrat Haroon ______ 192
The Demise of Nabi Musa ______ 192
Other Incidents During the Prophethood of Nabi Musa ______ 193
Nabi Musa and Qaroon ______ 194
When did Qaroon's Incident Take Place? ______ 195
Nabi Musa and Hazrat Khidr ______ 196
Important things about Khidr ______ 200
Trouble Caused to Hazrat Musa by Bani Israel ______ 202
The Sabbath Day ______ 203
Other Matters Concerning Prophethood of Nabi Musa (Alaihis Salãm)'s Time ______ 203
The Judgement of Maarile Bucaile ______ 204
Rational Views with Regard to the Splitting of the Sea ______ 205
Sihr (Sorcery) and Religion ______ 206
DifferenceBetween a Miracle and Sorcery ______ 207
Life after Death ______ 209

The Abundance of Bounties ____ 209
Musa ﷺ as a Messenger ____ 210
Lessons and Warnings ____ 211

Important Points ____ 215
The Position of Divine Revelation ____ 215
The Effects of Continuous Slavery and Bondage ____ 215
The Blessings of Imān ____ 216

Addition by the Arranger of this Volume ____ 216
The Imān of a Baedwi ____ 216
The Greatness of the Sahaba ____ 218

Hazrat Yushaa Bin Noon ﷺ ____ 219—222
The Mention of Yushaa' in the Qur'ān ____ 219
Entry into the Holy Land ____ 220
Disobedience ____ 220
Allah's Punishment ____ 221
Warnings and Lessons ____ 221

Hazrat Hizkeel ﷺ ____ 223—227
The Qur'ān and Hazrat Hizkeel ﷺ ____ 223
Important Points ____ 224
Reviving the Dead ____ 224
Jihad ____ 225
Lessons ____ 225

Hazrat Ilyaas ﷺ ____ 228—229
Ilyaas ﷺ in the Qur'ān ____ 228
Admonition ____ 229

Hazrat Al-Yasa ﷺ — **230**

Mention of Al-Yasa' in the Qur'ān — 230

Hazrat Shamweel ﷺ — **231—237**

Hazrat Shamweel ﷺ in the Qur'ān — 231
Taaloot — 231
Jaaloot — 232
Hazrat Daawood ﷺ — 232
The Mission of Hazrat Sahmweel ﷺ — 232
Taaboot of Sakeena — 233
The Battle between Taaloot and Jaaloot — 233
The Bravery of Hazrat Dawud ﷺ — 234
Lessons and Warnings — 235
The Appointment of Hazrat Taaloot ﷺ as 'King' — 236

Hazrat Dawood ﷺ — **238—252**

The Nickname of Khalifa — 238
The Zabbur — 239
Special Qualities of Dawud ﷺ — 240
Nabi Dawud and Glorification of Allah — 240
Iron Becomes Soft in His Hands — 241
Speaking and Conversing to the Birds — 242
The Matter of Farm Lands — 242
The Story of the Fat Tailed Sheep — 244
The Tafseer of the Verses — 245
Nabi Dawud (*Alaihis Salām*)'s Life Span — 247
Lessons — 247
One Very Important Point — 251
An Importnat Clarification — 251

Hazrat Sulaiman ﷺ — **253—275**

Lineage and Childhood — 253
Special Status of Sulaiman ﷺ — 253
Special Bounties on Sulaiman ﷺ — 253
Understanding the Speech of Birds — 254
Sulaiman (*Alaihis Salām*)'s Control over the Wind — 254
Control over the Jinn and Animals — 255
The Building of Baitul Muqaddas — 255
Treasures of Copper — 257
The Queen of Sheba — 257
Where is Saba — 262
Hudhud — 262
The Throne of the Queen — 262
The Queen's Acceptance of Islām — 263
Queen's Marriage — 263
The Death of Sulaiman ﷺ — 263
Tafseer of Some Points — 264
The Testing and Trial — 266
The Valley of the Ants — 266
One brought Saba's Throne — 268
Bani Israel's Accusation — 269
Conclusion — 271
Warnings and Lessons — 271

Hazrat Ayoob ﷺ — **276—285**

Hazrat Ayoob ﷺ in the Qur'ān — 276
A Few Points of Tafseer — 278
Meaning of 'Massaniyas Shaitan' — 279
Other Incidents — 281

Lessons and Warnings — 283

Hazrat Yunus عليه السلام — 286—293

Hazrat Yunus عليه السلام in the Qur'ān — 286
His Lineage and Era — 288
Place of His Mission — 288
His Death — 289
The Virtue of Yunus عليه السلام — 289
Lessons and Warnings — 291

Hazrat Thul-Kifl عليه السلام — 294

Hazrat Uzair عليه السلام — 295—297

The Mention in the Qur'ān — 295
The Life — 295
So-called Son of God — 295
The Incident Mentioned in Surah Baqarah — 296
Lessons — 297

Hazrat Zakariya عليه السلام — 298—303

Hazrat Zakariya عليه السلام in the Qur'ān — 298
The Life History — 298
Zakariya's Off-spring — 300
Point of Tafsser — 302
The Death of Zakariya عليه السلام — 303

Hazrat Yahiya عليه السلام — 304—311

The Birth of Hazrat Yahiya عليه السلام — 304
Points of Tafseer — 305
Conveying the Message — 307

The Story of His Martyrdom ____ 310
The Place of Martyrdom ____ 310
The Night of Meeraaj ____ 310
Warnings and Lessons ____ 311

The As-Habul—Jannah ____ 312—315
The As-Haabul Jannah and the Qur'ãn ____ 312
Opinions Concerned ____ 313
Lessons ____ 314

The Story of the Believer and the Unbeliever ____ 316—321
Commentary on this Event ____ 318
Lessons ____ 319

The As-Haabul Qaryah ____ 322—326
The As-Haabul Qaryah in the Qur'ãn ____ 322
Opinions Regarding these Events ____ 325
Lessons ____ 325

Hazrat Luqmaan ____ 327—334
The Holy Qur'ãn and Hazrat Luqmaan ____ 327
A Man of Wisdom ____ 329
A Few Points Pertaining to Tafseer ____ 330
The Wisdom of Luqmaan ____ 331
Preaching ____ 334

The As-Haab-e-Sabbath ____ 335—342
Prohibition of the Sabbath Day ____ 335
Which Town ____ 340
The Era of this Incident ____ 340
Some Important Points of Tafseer ____ 341

Reality of this Transformation ____ 341

The Result of the Transformed People ____ 341

Lessons ____ 342

The As-Haabul Ras (630 B.C.) ____ 343—345

The Qur'ān and the As-Haabul Ras ____ 343

The As-Haabul Ras ____ 344

The Verdict ____ 344

Baitul Muqaddas and the Jews ____ 346—367

Introduction ____ 346

Baitul Muqaddas ____ 346

Warning to Bani Israel ____ 347

The Evils of the Jews in the First Era ____ 351

Bakhat Nasr ____ 352

Salvation from Slavery ____ 353

The Statement of the Torah ____ 353

The Killing of Hazrat Yahiya ﷺ ____ 355

Retribution of their Actions ____ 356

Third Golden Opportunity ____ 358

Everlasting Humiliation ____ 359

Lessons and Warnings ____ 360

Thul Qarnain ____ 368—403

Introduction ____ 368

The Person of Thul Qarnain ____ 369

The Question about Thul Qarnain ____ 370

Why these Specific Questions ____ 371

The Prophets of Bani Israel ____ 372

Historical Evidence ____ 373

An Urgent Task in the West ____ 373
Important Task in the East ____ 375
The Third Expedition ____ 375
The Conquest of Babilon ____ 376
The Religious Beliefs of Khorus ____ 378
The Religion of Zorotashet ____ 379
Thul Qarnain and the Holy Qur'ãn ____ 380
Yajooj and Majooj ____ 387
The Barrier Wall of Zul Qarnain ____ 389
The Qur'ãn and the Wall of Zul Qarnain ____ 391
The Wall of Zul Qarnain ____ 392
Other Barrier Walls ____ 393
The Exit of Yajooj and Majooj ____ 393
The Tafseer of Allama Kashmiri ____ 398
The Hadith of Bukhari and Muslim ____ 400
Was Zul Qarnain a Nabi? ____ 401
Lessons and Warnings ____ 401
Note from Who Abridged this Work ____ 402
Lessons ____ 403

The Story of the As-Haabil Kahf ____ 404—414

The Qur'ãn and the As-Haabil Kahf ____ 405
Points of Tafseer ____ 412

The Story of Saba ____ 415—429

The People of Saba ____ 416
Saba and their Stages of Rule ____ 416
The Civilization of Saba ____ 417
The Dam of Ma'aarib ____ 417
Their Disobedience to Allah ____ 420

The Flood of 'Iram ____ 421
The First Punishment ____ 421
The Second Punishment ____ 423
The Extent of the Flood of 'Iram ____ 426
The Religious Condition of Saba ____ 426
A Few Point of Tafseer ____ 427
Results and Lessons ____ 427

The Ashabul Ukhdood ____ 430—434
The Qur'ãn and the Ashabul Ukhdood ____ 430
The Details of the Story ____ 431

The Story of Tubba' ____ 435—438
The People of Tubba' ____ 436
Warnings and Lessons ____ 437

The Ashaabul Feel ____ 439—454
Abyssinia and Najashie ____ 439
Abraha-tul Ashram ____ 440
The Ashaabul Feel ____ 440
The Qur'ãn and the Ashaabul Feel ____ 445
The Real Story ____ 446
Lessons and Warnings ____ 448

Hazrat Esa ﷺ ____ 455—523
The Qur'ãn and Hazrat Esa ﷺ ____ 455
Imran and Hannah ____ 456
The Piety of Hazrat Mariam ____ 457
Hazrat Maseeh ____ 458
Description of Esa ﷺ ____ 463
His Advent as a Messenger of Allah ____ 463

The Clear Signs (Miracles) 465
The Reality of a Miracle 466
Hazrat Esa ﷺ and his Miracles 470
Esa ﷺ and His Teachings 476
The Disciples of Nabi Esa ﷺ 478
Comparrision Regarding Disciples 479
The Descent of the Table from Heaven 481
Esa (*Alaihis Salãm*)'s Ascent into the Heavens 483
The Few Tafseer Points 495
Belief in Esa ﷺ before His Death 497
The Life of Esa ﷺ 499
The Events at the Descent of Esa ﷺ 502
The Death of Messiah 505
Nabi Esa ﷺ and the Day of Qiyaamat 505
The Divisions of Bani Israel 508
The Four Versions of the Injeel 511
The Qur'ãn and the Injeel 511
The Qur'ãn and the Doctrine of Trinity 515
Nabi Esa ﷺ is a Chosen One 516
The Messiah is neither God nor the Son of God 517
Atonement 520
Something worth paying attention to: 522

Sayyeduna Muhammad ﷺ 524—658

Hazrat Muhammad ﷺ and the Holy Qur'ãn 524
Propecies Regarding His Advent 528
The Arrival of Muhammad ﷺ 529
His Genealogy 536

His Childhood as an Orphan 539
His Dislike of Polytheism 543
The Divine Mission 544
The First Era of Revelation 547
The Second Era of His Mission 548
The Announcement of His Call 550
The World-wide Mission 553
The Speech of Hazrat Jaa'far رضي الله عنه 554
The Isra (Maeraaj) 556
The Oneness of the Event 557
The Year of the Maeraaj 557
The Qur'ãn and the Maeraaj 558
The Hadeeth and Proof of the Maeraaj 559
The Nature of the Incident 559
The Maeraaj, Israa and the Qur'ãn 560
The Maeraaj Incident 561
Some Details Regarding the Maeraaj 564
Seeing Allah on the Maeraaj 568
The Hijrat 568
The Hijrat to Abyssinia 568
The Causes for the Hijrat to Madinah 569
Rasulullah (Sallallãhu 'alaihi wasallam)'s Hijrat 571
Darul Nadwa 571
The Qur'ãn and the Hijrat to Madinah 573
Hijrat 575
Armies and Expeditions 578
Badr 578
The Battle of Badr 578
The Prayer for Help 585

Help from the Unseen ____ 585
The Result of the Battle of Badr ____ 587
Badr Changed the History of the World ____ 588
The Battle of Uhud ____ 588
The Martyrdom of Sayeduna 'Hamza ﷺ ____ 592
The Qur'ãn and the Battle of Uhud ____ 593
The Battle of the Ahzaab ____ 595
The Qur'ãn and the Battle of the Ahzaab ____ 598
The Incident of Hudaybia ____ 599
The Bay'atur Ridwaan ____ 602
The Peace Agreement and Treaty ____ 603
The Great Victory ____ 606
The Incident Concerning Haatib bin Balta'a' ﷺ ____ 608
Breaking the Idols ____ 614
Muhammad ﷺ as the Mercy to all the Universe ____ 614
Rasulullah (Sallallãhu 'alaihi wasallam)'s Khutbat at the Conquest ____ 616
The Conquest of Makkah and the Qur'ãn ____ 617
The Battle of Hunain (Hunain) ____ 619
The Battle of Hunain and the Qur'ãn ____ 621
The Battle of Tabook ____ 622
Financial Help ____ 623
Excuses of those who Failed to Accompany ____ 624
Social Boycott ____ 625
Complete Obedience to Rasulullah ﷺ ____ 625
The Love for Rasulullah ﷺ ____ 627
The Acceptance of Repentance ____ 630
The Qur'ãn and the Battle of Tabook ____ 631

Important Battles and their Results ____ 631
Zaid the Adopted Son ____ 635
Zaid bin Haritha ____ 635
The End of Adoption ____ 638
Points of Insight ____ 641
Banu Nadeer ____ 641
The Qur'ãn and Banu Nadeer ____ 643
Lessons ____ 643
False accusation against Hazrat 'A'isha (*Radhiyallãhu 'anha*) ____ 644
Lessons and Admonitions ____ 647
The News brought by an Un Reliable One ____ 649
Admonition ____ 651
The Tale of the Masjid-e-Zirar ____ 651
Lessons ____ 653
Joining His Companion on High ____ 654
Lessons against Hypocrisy ____ 656
The Seal of Prophethood and Messengership ____ 657

Qasasul Ambiyaa

The Holy Qur'ãn does not relate historical facts merely for the sake of telling a story which is of historical value. Its main aim in relating happenings is to draw attention to the results, conclusions and deductions from these incidents so that they become a source of guidance for men and prove to be lessons for them that appeal to their minds and emotions that from these historical events, lessons should be derived. These lessons should convince them that the existence of Allah is an undeniable fact and that His Mighty Hand is playing a major role in the affairs of men. It should also bring to their notice that to follow the stipulations of His deen brings success and leads to salvation and is the way towards all progress. That is what Islãm—the natural religion—is about.

From: ***Qasasul Qur'ãn***

Preface

The most authentic and comprehensive work of Maulana Hifzur Rahman Seoharwy, *Qasasul Qur'ãn* needs no introduction. However, the Manner in which our friend Sayed Tanzeem Hussain Saheb has brought forth an abridged version of a voluminous and bulky work he has undoubtedly, fulfilled one of the needs of this time. He has adopted such a method of abridgement whereby not only has he retained and mentioned every important fact in the lives of the Holy Prophets (*Alaihimus Salãm*) and other saintly personalities, which are of lessons to men, but also discussed in brought outline some other important matters. It is hoped that with Allah's grace, those persons who are occupied and busy at all times, will be able to derive adequate benefit from this work.

The great effort of Sayed Tanzeem Hussain in this old age of his is really something praiseworthy. May Allah reward him well for this great effort.

Qari Sayed Rasheedul-Hasan Hussainy Nadwi
Imam and Khateeb
Jama Masjid, New Town
Allamah Binori Town, Karachi
P5 *Muharram*, 1308 *Hijri*

Publisher's Foreword

The respected personality of Maulana Hifzur Rahman Seoharwy is one of the most eminent Ulama of the Indo-Pak Sub-Continent. His most approved and well-known book, Qasasul-Qur'ãn is considered to be a unique publication on this subject. The point that distinguishes it from other similar books is the fact that after every story, Maulana has made use of deep thought and reflection to present to the readers the lessons and points of guidance from the related episodes. Thus for the teachers and lecturers at *Deeni Madressas* and for preachers in mosques and students of deen the study and perusal of this book is of utmost benefit.

The original book appeared in four volumes with over 1800 pages of subject matter. Sayed Tanzeem Hussain Saheb has brought forth an abridged version there of in only 600 pages and this has been met with a verdict of approval from all academic circles, especially by virtue of the fact that he has fulfilled one of the most pressing needs of the time and by leaving aside unimportant discussions have given the busy and occupied ones also a chance to benefit from these work. May Allah reward him well.

Author's Foreword

All praise be to Allah who has guided us with the Holy Book and revealed to us the Qur'ãn in a clear Arabic language and in it. He related the best of stories as an admonition and a reminder for the believers. And May peace and blessings be upon the Most truthful and trustworthy Prophet Muhammad ﷺ, the messenger of Allah and seal of all the Prophets and upon his offspring, and companions who were all of them guiding stars for all the righteous ones.

Among the inimitable ways in which Allah has chosen for the sake of the guidance of men, is this that attention is drawn to the good and bad deeds of nations and the resultant fruits of such deeds of which they are reminded so that those deeds may be a lesson for men. For this reason those stories are not being related in a style as is generally done in history. The major aim is to convey the truth and to invite to Allah and with this in mind attention is only drawn to those aspects which furthers this objective. For this reason there is constant repetition so that these events can sink into the hearts and minds of listeners and they become attentive towards them. This sinking in and attentiveness can only be achieved if the same event is repeated in various ways and styles whereby sleeping faculties are woken up.

The Qur'ãnic stories and events deal mostly with previous nations and the Messengers of Allah (*Alaihimus*

Salãm) who were sent to them and bit by bit other matters also become included there-in, mostly dealing with the arguments over good and bad and the battles between the friends of Allah and the friends of *Shaitan*, which in itself proves to be a great lesson and admonishment for me.

But, leaving others aside, there are today so few Muslims who derive benefit from Allah's last and perfect law-book, the Qur'ãn, to fill our hearts with *Iman* and *Yaqeen* After all it is Allah's law and we are commanded to implement its orders in our lives, Moreover we are required to ponder over its meanings as this Qur'ãn is the means forwards acquiring success and salvation in both this world and the here after.

At the time of the Revelation of the Qur'ãn, the Messenger of Allah became so distressed and defected at the enmity and opposition of the polytheists that he raised this complaint to Allah: (5:25—30)

However, in this 15th century, if we should examine our hearts, we will find that in spite of our claims to be Muslims and believing the Qur'ãn to be the word of Allah, how few are who have made this word of Allah the pattern for their lives and the model on which to base their lives, who read and recited with this aim in mind?

It was my aim, seeing this condition of my people and myself, to translate this great source of admonition into Urdu so that by presenting the translated version, the hearts of people will automatically become drawn to the original i.e., the Qur'ãn and thereby acquire everlasting happiness.

In spite of my simple style of writing, care has been taken to confine myself to a few special points.

(a) In this book the basis for all the stories is the Holy Qur'ãn and the authentic *Hadith* and these have been further elucidated with historical facts.

(b) Where there appears any contradiction or differences in the stories as told in the old testament and the Qur'ãn, then with clear arguments an effort has been made either to reconcile the versions or with clear arguments to prove the truth as is expounded in the Qur'ãn.

(c) An effort has been made to point out the nonsensical Israili stories and where there have been nonsensical objections from enemies, these have in the light of the true facts been made clear for what they are.

(d) In some special places there have been introduced some discussions on matters of disputes in *Tafseer* and *Hadith* and after discussing these the views of the saintly elders have been mentioned as a solution.

(e) The facts concerning every Prophet ﷺ and in which chapter of the Qur'ãn they are mentioned, has been gathered in one place.

(f) Lastly, together with all the above points, a special heading of "Results and lessons", is introduced, giving the actual objective of this book and its main purpose viz., admonition and warning. Special attention is drawn to this aspect.

Servant of the Millat

Muhammad Hifzur Rahman Seoharwy

22 *Rajab,* 1360 *Hijri*

Translator's Foreword

For me as the translator of this book by Maulana Hifzur Rahman is a great honour. Throughout my student days in Darul Uloom Deoband in India, Maulana Hifzur Rahman or as we know him them as the *Mujahid-e-Millat* was one of the most respected leaders of the Muslim community. We used to flock to listen to his most interesting lectures. And as the general secretary of the *Jamiatul-Ulama*, and a M.P. he was also a great *'Alim* (scholar) as can be gauged from this book *Qasasul Ambiya* (Tales of the Prophets) which entailed great research. I can remember whenever the students were confronted with any problem in the lives of any of the prophets, they always took refuge in Maulana's book for answers. I took upon it as a great honour in being in some small manner associated with Maulana's scholarship, even though this is an abridged version of the original book. But I must also state that I found great difficulty in translating this book because of the exceptionally high quality of the Urdu language used in the book.

I hope that the English translation of Maulana Hifzur Rahman's scholarly work will also be of great benefit to the English-speaking people. I just hope that I have been able to do justice to the original thoughts of the author.

Yusuf Karaan
Strand, South Africa

Creation of the Universe

Before dealing with the facts contained in the Qur'ãn concerning Hazrat Adam عليه السلام, we have to cast our minds at the period before the arrival of man on this earth. In this regard science has opened up a new door of discussion viz. The theory of evolution. Those who believe in this theory maintain that man was not created and brought into existence as a human being all at once, but contend that before man appeared, he went through various stages of evolution until he came to his present form after millions of years. They contend that after life became created initially, it started in a primitive form and evolved through the plant Kingdom to the animal kingdom and after millions of years and numerous stages finally evolved to the stage where man appeared. That is the theory put forward by men of science.

Revelation on the other hand maintain that the creator of this Universe created the first man Hazrat Adam عليه السلام in his complete form and then created his mate, Hazrat Hawwa and from the two of them the human race came into being. This is that man to whom Allah granted superiority over His other creatures and to whom he handed over the responsibility of carrying the *Amãnat* of being His vice-gerent on earth. To him He has made all the other creatures subservent: Allah says:

> "Verily we have created man in the best mould."
>
> (*At-Teen*)

> Further He says: "Indeed we have honoured the children of Adam." (7:14)

He also declares:

> "I shall place in this earth one who shall be my vicegerent."

He also states:

> "We have offered the trust to the heavens and the earth and they all refused to take its responsibility and feared to take it, but man accepted to carry it." (72:33)

What we have to see now is whether in reality there is a contradiction between the theory of evolution and what Revelation says, or if there is scope for reconciliation between the two views. It should be born in mind that our knowledge and experience have shown that there is no contradiction between religions truths and science. And if there does appear to exist such contradiction, it is merely because of some expects of science being hidden. And it has been seen very often that when the certain is lifted from those aspects, of science, the contradiction disappears by itself and the facts as proclaimed by Revelation become clear. In other words we may say that where those appears to be any contradiction between science and Revolution, science is left as it is and Revelation is given preference.

At this stage it is natural that the question should be asked: What is the truth of the matter? The truth is that on this point there is no real difference of opinion between science and Revelation. Both factions, whether they maintain

that man was created after a long period of evolution through various stages or whether they believe he was created all of a sudden in his original form, believe that man is the highest form of Allah's creation, having reached the highest rank in intellectual development and understanding, being answerable for his deeds and conduct and being liable under the law. In other words, in view of man's conduct and intellectual development and his stimulation towards morality, it does not matter how he originally came into being. What matters is the object for which he was created. Did he come into this world without any fixed objective or intention or did he come for a special purpose? Are the outcome of his words, deeds and conduct of no consequence? Are his material and spiritual powers of no sequence or are they valuable in the fruits they produce? Does his life hold with in it a brilliant reality for the future or does it point in the direction of a dark future and is his present and past completely unconnected with his future?

If the answers to these questions are not in the negative, then naturally we will have to admit that it is much more better to focus on the object of his existence so that we will have to accept that this, being, who is the best of creation, shows that there is a very great objective for his creation.

The Holy Qur'ãn has dealt with both the positive and negative aspects of the object of man's creation and proclaimed the greatness of man's existence and further indicated that within the creation of Allah man has been created in "the best mould" and because of this best form he is worthy of honour and respect, thereby making him suitable to be granted the *Amanat* from Allah which made him the vice-gerent of Allah on earth.

Now in view of all this, how is it possible that he should be left alone to wander on earth without a fixed objective?

> "Does man think that he will be left without any fixed objective?" (75:36)

It is thus necessary that man's reason and intellect should be brought to such a level that it becomes superior to that of all the world in order for him to be able to distinguish clearly between good and evil to avoid evil and to be able to give preference to good.

> " He created man and showed him the way (of good and evil)." (20:50)

> " We have shown man both ways (good and evil)." (90:10)

Bear in mind further that the one who in addressed in the Qur'ãn with all its exhortations, invitations, its orders towards good and its prohibition of evil, its calls towards guidance is this being called man. For this reason the Qur'ãn left a side all details of man's creation and concentrated on his ending.

> 'Ask not the wise ones what is my beginning'
>
> I am concerned about what is my ending' (Iqbal)

The Islãmic Outlook on Scientific Controversies

In cases of scientific controversies and discussions the Islãmic viewpoint is this that in those matters which had reached the level of certainty and experience, and where Qur'ãnic knowledge and revelation does not deny or reject those findings, such findings should be accepted because the Qur'ãn does not oppose clear observation and self evident truths. To reject such clear evident truths would be pure prejudice and narrow-mindedness.

As for those matters which had not yet reached the level that it can be said to be clear self-evident findings, like the question before us at the moment, one should not proceed to give interpretations to the Qur'ãn to accomodate those views. In such cases one should not try to explain the verses in the light of these findings.

One should wait until such time that through time those theories become so accepted that to reject them would be tantamount to rejecting self-evident observations. It has been experienced that on many occasions scientific theories have been rejected and cast aside, whereas never once has it been that Qur'ãnic truths have had to be rejected and cast aside. Whereas never once has it been that Qur'ãnic truths have had to be rejected and set aside. On the other hand where a

scientific theory has had to be accepted as a fact, such acceptance did not mean that this fact had gone way ahead of what the Qur'ãn actually stated.

Hazrat Adam عليه السلام

Allah created Adam عليه السلام from dust and before this matter had been gathered together He had informed the Angels that very soon he should be creating a being from dust who will be called 'man' and who will be granted the vice-gerency of this world.

The matter from which Adam عليه السلام was formed became mixed with such earth which always adopted new forms and when the form of Adam عليه السلام was ready, Allah breathed into it the soul and immediately the form became a body made up of bones, muscle and skin, alive and endowed with emotions, feelings, intelligence and passions.

At that time a command from Allah came to the Angels that they should prostrate before Adam عليه السلام. All of them fell prostrate in answer to this command, except *Iblees* who through his pride and arrogance refused to obey the command.

The Arguments of Iblees

We know that Allah is the knower of the seen and the unseen, and He knows the inner secrets of the hearts as well as the past, present and future. By way of putting *Shaitan* to the test, He asked him: "What caused you to refuse to prostrate when I commanded you to do so?"

" He replied:

> "I am better than him. You have created me from fire and him you have created from dust." (7:12)

What he meant was that he was created from fire which seeks the lofty regions and superiority, while Adam was a mere earthly being. Why should a lofty being of fire prostrate before an earthly creature? After all in all aspects he was superiors. It there should be any prostration, Adam should prostrate before him.

The unfortunate *Shaitan*, in his involvement with his own pride and arrogance failed to understand that as both he and Adam were creatures created by Allah, Allah was the one better to understand who was superior. He failed to understand that superiority was not confined to the essence from which one was created, but was largely dependent upon the qualities which Allah has put inside any being.

Because *Shaitan*'s answer was based upon his pride and arrogance, Allah made it clear to him that this arrogance has made him blind so as to deny Allah's rights as creator, thereby considering Him to be unjust. Allah made it clear to him that his ignorance had made him unable to understand realities and as a result he was the cause of his own over lasting destruction and that would be its result.

Iblees Begs for a Time

When *Iblees* realized that his disobedience, and his arrogance and his accusation of injustice against Allah has forever banished him form the mercy of Allah and deprived him of entrance into Paradise, instead of repenting to Allah and exhibiting over his actions, he asked that he be granted a time of respite till the time of *Qiyamat*.

At that time Allah's wisdom was in favour with that and his request was approved. On hearing this he once again exhibited his *Shaitani* tendencies.

He said:

> "You have expelled me from Paradise. Adam عليه السلام is the cause of my suffering this humiliation. I shall lead his children astray. I shall come upon them from all sides and cause most of them to be ungrateful to you, except your sincere servants who will be safe from my plans."

Allah replies:

> " I do not care. There is with us a natural law of retribution for all deeds. As will be done, so will be their reward. And whoever of the children of Adam عليه السلام that will turn away from me and follow you, will enter hell like you as punishment. Get you out of here in humiliation and disgrace and with your ill fortune and together with your followers go and await the everlasting curse."

Adam عليه السلام*, as Khalifa*

We have already mentioned that when Allah intended to create Adam عليه السلام, he told the Angels:

> "I shall place in the earth a *Khalifa*. He will have the ability to carry out his own intentions and wishes and will be able to perform all deeds and he will be able to do whatever he wishes according to his intentions. He will be as if he is exhibition of my will."

When the Angels heard this announcement they were greatly surprised they said: "If it is the aim in creating this being that he should glorify your name by night and by day and to continuously praise you, then for that purpose we would be better, we who at all times are busy with singing your praises and all the time obey your commands. We expect that this being created of dust will be inclined toward evil. It may be that he will proceed to commit evil and shed blood on earth. O lord, what is the object of this creation?"

First of all Allah taught the Angels the lesson that it was not proper for the creation to be hasty in passing judgement over the affairs of the creator. It is not proper for them to cast doubts into His actions, especially where they also mention their own superiority. After all the Creator knows all those things, which are unknown to them.

The Teaching of Adam عليه السلام

Through this questioning of the Angels their aim was not to engage the creator in a debate or to raise objections against Him. What they actually wanted to know was what was the object of Adam (*Alaihis Salãm*)'s creation. They desired that the object of his creation should also be disclosed to them. For this reason, Allah after pointing out to them their shortcoming in the manner in which they put their question, wanted to explain to them in a practical manner, by word and deed so that they out of their own would have to admit Adam (*Alaihis Salãm*)'s superiority and the greatness of Allah's wisdom and so that their own inability become self-evident. Hence Allah endowed Adam عليه السلام with His greatest attribute in knowledge and taught him the knowledge of things. Then He brought him before the Angels and asked them: "What knowledge have you regarding these things?"

They had no knowledge. They resided within the Divine Nearness and realized immediately that the aim of question was not to put them to attest as they were never taught those things before. They realized that the aim was to admonish them and point out to them that the post of being Allah's *Khalifa* on earth was not dependent upon any amount of glorification and praising but is dependent upon the knowledge one has. This is so because rule on earth is impossible without knowledge.

The Angels were brought to the realisation that in view of the fact that Allah had made Adam the manifestation of His attribute of knowledge, he was more suitable to be the *Khalifa* on earth, not they. Moreover the Angels in spite of their services being rendered to Allah, are completely free of all worldly passions and needs and they were also unacquainted with those passions and needs. And because Adam had to deal with these things at all times, his knowledge of these things was something natural to him-Those qualities which had been placed in him by the Creator. He had been taught everything that had been necessary for him to know.

They were made to realize that they were not in acted of food and drink and as such were not obliged to study the treasures and sources of sustenance that was placed in the earth. They had no fear of drowning in the seas for them to invent the use of ships and boats. Neither were they in need of inventing various means of treatment for ailments and sicknesses; or joining of various chemical substances or to study the special qualities of nature's products or to study and investigate the secrets of the Universe medical discoveries etc. etc. There was for them no need to become acquainted with so many types of knowledge. Undoubtedly these matters were only suitable for Adam to endow himself with; so that he alone could have been Allah's vicegerent on earth.

Hawwa's Appearance

Hazrat lived in Paradise for quite a time on his own but all along felt a sort of loneliness and need for a partner in life as a natural need. Then Allah created Hawwa and when Adam met her as his life's partner he became very happy and contented.

The two of them had permission to reside in Paradise and to enjoy of all the fruits of Paradise except the fruits of one specific tree, and to avoid going near to it.

Exit from Paradise

Iblees found a way towards misleading Adam. He, through his whisperings, cast the thought into their minds that tree was the tree of life everlasting and that to eat of its fruits would bring everlasting life in Paradise in peace and comfort in the presence of Allah. He swore an oath that he was a well-wishing adviser to them and not an enemy. Hearing this Adam exhibited man's natural inclination toward forget fullness and he ackoned that Allah's command was a mere prohibiting one and not a Divine order from on High. In this he made a Major mistake and ate from the Prohibited tree. As soon as he did that he became aware of his human needs and necessities. He realised that he was naked, without clothes and both he and Hawwa used the leaves of fig to cover their private parts. It was as if this was the beginning of man's civilization.

As soon as this event took place the admonishment came from Allah's side, that how is it that in spite of the Divine Order he had still transgrassed? In his reply Adam, unlike *Shaitan* who tried to engage the Lord in on debate and tried to justify his actions with various explanatory interpretations; admitted his fault in penitent terms and with

sorrow. What happened was not out of rebellion or clear disobedience, but rather out of the human weakness of forget fullness. Hence he begged for forgiveness and took refuge in repentance.

Allah accepted his excuse and forgave him but by then the time had arrived for Adam عليه السلام had to take over the duty of being Allah's *Khalifa* on earth. Therefore together with this announcement of pardon, the order was also given that Adam عليه السلام and Hawwa and their children will have to live on the earth for a specific time and so also will their enemy Shaitan with all his enmity. This meant that Adam عليه السلام will have to live on earth between the two opposite Angelic and Shaitanic powers. It was further stipulated that should Adam عليه السلام and his children prove themselves to be true representatives, then the original homeland of the Paradise will become theirs unto eternity.

> "Proceed you and Hawwa to live on earth and perform your duty as two servants of Allah."

In this manner Adam عليه السلام and his life's partner Hawwa landed on earth.

Adam عليه السلام in the Qur'ãn

In the Qur'ãn the name of Hazrat Adam عليه السلام appears twenty-five times in twenty-five verses and among the mention of the Prophets (*Alaihimus Salãm*), he as the father of all mankind is the first to be mentioned. He is mentioned in the following *Surahs*: *Baqarah*, *Aa'raaf*, *Israel*, *Kahf* and *Taaha* where he is mentioned by name as well as by attributes. In *Surah Hijr* and *Saud* he is mentioned only by his attributes, whereas in *Surah Al-e-Imrãn*, *Ma'idah*, *Maryam* and *Yaseen* his name is mentioned by the way.

Lessons from the Story

In the story of Hazrat Adam ﷺ there are numerous lessons to be learnt and also many advices to be given. It is difficult to mention all those lessons here. However, it will seem appropriate to drew attention to some of those lessons.

1. The secret of Allah's mysterics are many and not every man, no matter how near he may reside to Allah's presence, can comprehend them all For this reason, the Angels of Allah, although being very near to Him, were unable to understand the wisdom of his creation. Until such time that the whole truth was exposed to them, they were perplexed and confused.
2. When Allah casts His attention towards any thing, no matter how insignificant or despicable, that things is immediately lifted and raised to a high position and becomes honoured and respected. For example, here a handful of dust was taken and with Allah attention showered upon it, it becomes transformed into the '*Khalifa* of Allah.' Similarly, with Allah's look of favour and beneficence, cast upon his position of Prophethood and messenger-ship, he was raised to great heights of spiritual blessings.
3. In spite of man being endowed with great honour and high rank, he still remained by virtue of his natural human weaknesses and these human frailties remained with him and it was this human weakness which in spite of his high position, caused him to be overcome with forget fullness which caused him to become influenced by the whisperings of *Shaitan.*
4. Although being a faulty one, if man's heart gets filled with sorrow and repentance, the doors of mercy does

> not become closed to him, and he does not, become one filled without hope of mercy. However a major condition for this mercy is that there should be sincerity and truth. And just as Adam ﷺ become a recipient of that mercy so also all his offspring will find that pardon and mercy available to them.

In the presence of Allah any insolence, disobedience and rebellion against His order can destroy one's greatest deeds of righteousness and virtue and can become the cause of everlasting loss and disgrace. The story of *Iblees* is indeed a story with a great lesson of warning. Note how had been previously noted for having been one with thousands of years of righteous deeds and now through arrogance and insolence displayed towards Allah all that has come to nought. The poet says:

> "*Shaitan* was destroyed through refusal to perform one prostration And even if for thousand of years he should perform it nothing will happen to offset that."
>
> "O you who have eyes and understanding take a lesson from the story of *Shaitan* who was destroyed by his arrogance and prick."

Masa'il Concerning the Story

Maulana Mohammad Hifzur Rahman Seoharwy has extracted twelve *Masa'il* from the story of Hazrat Adam ﷺ. Most of these *Masa'il* are of an Academic nature-not dealing with lessons derived from the story. Of these *Masa'il*, three are being mentioned now, which deal with points of knowledge in the interest of the readers.

1. How was Hawwa created?

The Qur'ãn says:

"And from that *Nafs* created his mate...." (5:4)

This verse does no give the details of how Hawwa was created. For this reason it contains the possibility of both forms of creation, viz that it is possibly an indication of Hawwa being created from the rib-bone of Adam as is the well-known story as is also contained in the Bible. It also contains the other possibility that Allah created her from the same original dust from which man was created, as a life-partner for him. As for as the first theory is concerned there are reports in Sahih Bukhary and Sahih Muslim that Hawwa was created from the rib of Adam .

The well-known research scholar explains that her being created from a rib is given by way of a metaphor in this sense that she has a nature and temperament like a rib bone, which is half-round and if a person is going to try and straighten its crookedness, it will break. Thus just as one should make use of the rib bone as it is in spite of its crookedness, without trying to straighten its crookedness. Similarly one should treat a woman with sympathetic kindness, otherwise if harshness is going to be used, Then instead of pleasurable results, the end result will be unpleasant. In short, the interpretation of the above verse according to the research scholars of Islãm inclines towards this meaning. This means that the Qur'ãn does not only refer to the creation of Hawwa but wishes to indicate that she is also a creation of Allah just like man is.

2. The Second question is this: When it is remembered that Hazrat Adam is a Prophet of Allah. We believe that the Prophets (*Alaihimus Salãm*) are all sinless beings so how is this *'Ismat* of the Prophet's reconciled with the fact that Adam was guilty of disobedience and sin?

Before answering this question a short discussion should be given on the point of the '*Ismat* of the Prophets."

Allah, the creator of this universe, created man with divers qualities. For example He placed in man good as well as bad qualities, so that man is able to perform good as well as bad deeds. He is also able to make intentions towards good as well as towards bad. This ability to intend good as well as bad is the distinguishing factor of man's make-up. From time to time Allah chooses from among men bearing these opposite qualities some human being to be His Messenger or Prophet for the sake of guiding mankind to the path of righteousness and true guidance and to walk the path towards Allah. The last in the line of these Prophets (*Alaihimus Salãm*) is the blessed person Muhammad ﷺ. And when his person is chosen for this duty, it is necessary that his life shall be free from all forms of sin and also be devoid of all forms of disobedience. At the same time it is also necessary that he should be a human being, who eats, drinks, sleeps and interacts with his family members and relatives, while being free of all sins, in practice and in intention. That is because he is to act as Allah's representative, guiding men towards all righteousness. In spite of a human being created with those opposite qualities in him, all forms of evil emanating from him, has been declared to be impossible, both in intention and in practical terms, so that his every intention, every action, every word and each and every movement from his side can become an example for all Universe. However, because of a human being the ability to forget and to commit a mistake has remained in him, and sometimes come out into the open. As soon as this happens he is made aware there of and with draw from it. As for forgetfulness, the matter is clear in that he is not responsible for any evil. As far as a fault or mistake is concerned, these pertain to those acts committed without there being any

intention of evil to be committed, neither is there any intention of rebellion against commands, nor is there the aim to go against the commands of Allah, while at the same time the act is not in itself evil and iniquitous. Bearing all this in mind, although this deed, (the fault or mistake) in itself is a permissible deed, but is not a suitable deed to be performed by the doer due to his special position. Due to special rank this person has with Allah, as soon as such a deed emanates from him and due to Allah's protection over him, he is soon warned thereof and admonished, that such a deed does not become him and is very unsuitable and inappropriate.

All these things mentioned above is known as the *Ismat* (innocence, sinless nature) of the Prophets.'

Adam (Alaihis Salãm)'s Ismat

After the above explanation, if we ponder over the story of Nabi Adam عليه السلام, we come to know that in *Surah Baqarah* it has been said clearly that the fault committed by Nabi Adam عليه السلام was not a sin or disobedience on his part, but was in fact a minor mistake: In verse (2:36) the Qur'ãn states:

> "And *Shaitan* made them slip." (2:36)

In *Surah A'raaf* it states:

> "Then *Shaitan* began to whisper to them."

And in *Surah Taaha* it states the reason for this fault and this whispering and at the same time cleared Nabi Adam عليه السلام of any intention of sin or any sinful practice.

> "And we had already beforehand taken the corenaul from Adam عليه السلام, But he forgot and we found on his part no firm resolve (to commit disobedience)." (20:116)

By stating this Allah has clearly established the doctrine of Nabi Adam ﷺ being sinless and innocent.

In the story of Nabi Adam ﷺ mention is also made of the Angels and also of the '*Jinn*'. Both these being are special creations of Allah or they may refer to two powers, i.e., the angelic power and the *Shaitanic* power.

The Angels

What ever the Qur'ãn and the *Hadith* have taught us of the Angels, the end result thereof is this that we have not been told the true facts about their creation and neither do were see them. But it has been made compulsory upon us to accept their presence and to believe that they are a special creation of Allah.

The Jinn

Similarly the '*Jinn*' also is a special creation of Allah. Here too we are not fully informed of their creation and they too are not visible to us like the rest of humanity. But the Qur'ãn has made it compulsory upon us to believe that they are special creation of Allah, also subject to the laws of *Shariat*. They also have a system of births and deaths among them and among them there are righteous ones as well as evil ones.

Iblees (Shaitan)

From verses of the Qur'ãn we come to know that *Shaitan* belongs to the offspring of the '*Jinn*' and according to the Qur'ãn, *Shaitan* himself admitted in front of Allah that he was created of fire.

From the Arranger of this Volume

The story of Nabi Adam عليه السلام, apart from the fact that it gives some sound advised and serves as a means of admonishing mankind; is "also important" in this sense that it throws lights upon the object of man's creation, gives man's position on earth, and also in view of this position explains his strivings, the conclusion of which is the following:

1. Allah made Adam عليه السلام his vice-gerent and sent him into this world. Here, he is to strive to attain the object for which man was created.

2. The criterion for bang the *Khalifa* of Allah is not constant recitation of *Tasbeeh*, *Tahleel*, *Taqdees* or *Tamjeed*, but is only the being endowed with knowledge.

3. Allah granted Adam عليه السلام 'the knowledge of things' and thereby endowed him with His greatest attribute of which he is a perfect manifestation.

4. Man's superiority over the angels is because of this quality of knowledge and not because of profuse recitations of *Tasbeeh* or *Takbeer*.

Allamah Iqbal has in poetic lines drawn the picture of Nabi Adam (*Alaihis Salãm*)'s exit from Paradise and his descent upon the earth. We now quote those lines of poetry:

"You have been granted the impatience of night and day.
I know not whether you are earthly or heavenly.
I have heard that out of dust you were created
Your nature is both of the stars and the moon.
If your beauty you should see in a dream
Your gratefulness will be as thousand happiness.

Earth welcomes Adam ﷺ

"Open your eyes and look! See the earth, see the skies, and see the space above.

See the sun rising from the eastern firmament be not restless."

Qaabil and Haabil

The Qur'ãn does not mention the names of Nabi Adam (*Alaihis Salãm*)'s two sons. It only referred to "the two sons of Adam ﷺ." However these are the names mentioned in the *Towraat*. According to some reports a great dispute arose between these brothers over their marriage. In order to settle the dispute Nabi Adam ﷺ suggested that both of them perform a sacrifice and place it before Allah for acceptance. The one whose sacrifice will be accepted, will be given the right to execute his intention.

According to the *Towraat*, it was a practice at that time that the sacrifice should be placed upon a lofty place. A fire-bolt would them strike from heaven and burn it up. Haabil, brought a fat sheep from among his flock of sheep while Qaabil brought a quantity of inferior quality grain. From this their intention and sincerity could be gauged.

The fire-bolt from on high burn up Haabil's offering as a sign of the acceptance of his offer. Seeing this, Qaabil could not bear the humiliation and threatened to kill his brother. Haabil replied: 'I will not left up my hands against you. Do as you wish. As for the offers, Allah only accepts that which is granted with a clean intention.'

There up Qaabil, in anger and hatred, killed his brother.

In the Qur'ãn no mention is made of the dispute over their marriage and neither are their names mentioned. Only

the story of their sacrificial offers is mentioned. Then it goes on to tell the story of the burial of Haabil's corpse.

After the killing, Qaabil was troubled as to what to do with the corpse of his brother. Up to that time the offspring of Nabi Adam ﷺ had never yet had to deal with death. For this reason Nabi Adam ﷺ did not as yet explain the Divine regulations regarding death of a human being.

Qaabil saw a crow using his claws to dig a hole in the ground and it immediately dawned upon him that in similar manner he should dig a hole in which to bury the corpse of his brother. According to another reports he saw the crow burying a dead crow in the hole and it dawned upon him to do similarly with his brother's corpse.

When Qaabil saw this he became intensely sorry over his life, saying to himself: " I am not even like this animal who hides his criminal act." In sorrow he bent his head and in similar manner buried the corpse of his brother. After telling this story the Qur'ãn says:

> "On account of that: We ordained for the children of Israel that if anyone slew a person-unless it be for murder or for spreading mischief in the land it would be as if he slew the whole people and if anyone saved a life, it would be as if he saved the life of the whole people." (5:32)

In his Musnad Imam Ahmad quoted a report by Ibn Mas'ud, where in Rasulullah ﷺ is reported to have said: "When in this world a murder takes place unjustly the sin will also be upon the neck of the eldest son of Nabi Adam ﷺ (Qaabil) because he is the first person to commit this unjust act and thereby initiated this unholy practice."

Warning

From these verses of *Surah Maidah* and the above-quoted *Hadith* we are warned that a man should under no circumstances be the first one to commence a certain sinful act, because whosoever in the world is going to commit that same act. The sin of performing that wrongful act is also going to the account of him who started it first. In this way he will become the recipient of everlasting humiliation and disgrace (May Allah save as from that).

Hazrat Nooh عليه السلام

The First Messenger

After Nabi Adam عليه السلام, comes the story of Nabi Nooh عليه السلام, who is the first *Nabi* (Prophet) who has been honoured with being a Messenger (*Rasul*) of Allah. In Sahih Muslim under the chapter on Intercession there is a *Hadith* in which is said:

> "O Nooh عليه السلام, you were the first on earth to be made a *Rasul*."

Call and Disobedience

By the time of the advent of Nabi Nooh عليه السلام, the whole nation had become for removed from the worship of the One Allah and from the light of true religion. Various false idols had been introduced to take place of the true God, and man had began to worship those idols. Thus in accordance with the general practice by Allah, He sent one from among themselves to be a guide and spiritual leader for them. Nabi Nooh عليه السلام was chosen and he proceeded to call them to the path of righteousness and invited them towards the true religion. However they refused to listen to his call and with stubborn resistance contempt rejected him. Both the leaders of the nation and the nobles rejected him and left no stone

unturned to leap scorn on him. The followers among the people followed their leaders and they too went out of their way to humiliate him. They were surprised that one who had no superiority over them as for as worldly means were concerned and who had no other special Angelic qualities should now claim to be a spiritual guide to them that we should follow his lead.

When these nobles saw some of the weak and poor people following Nabi Nooh عليه السلام, they said in an arrogant manner. "Do you want us to follow your leadership just like these ordinary people?" They considered those followers of Nooh عليه السلام to be mere blind followers, without any opinion of their own, unlike themselves who were the men of opinion among the people. They looked upon these followers as being incapable of understanding the reality of any situation. The reckoned that even if they were to listen to the words of Hazrat Nooh عليه السلام, They would first demand that he should put those lowly and poor folk away from him. Only after Nooh عليه السلام had put them away will they be prepared to listen to him as they were disgusted at those people and were unable to sit with them in one place.

Nabi Nooh عليه السلام heard their demand and gave just one answer: " What you demand will not come to pass because these people are Allah's sincere and righteous servants." If I should decide to do as you wish, then I will not be able of saving myself from Allah's punishment. I fear His punishment. With Allah sincerity counts a lot. With Him there is no question as to who is rich and who is poor. He further said to them:

> "I have come to you, bringing Allah's message of guidance. I lay no claim to having knowledge of the unseen and neither do I claim to be an angel. I am Allah's chosen messenger and

> apostle and my aim in life is to invite towards Allah. I have no claim to being richly endowed with worldly things; neither to being an Angel or a knower of the unseen."

These followers of mine, have with sincerity of heart accepted faith in Allah, and are looked upon by you as being despicable, lowly folk just because they are not rich like yourselves. Therefore in your opinion they are unable to attain to good or to true happiness because goodness and happiness in your opinion is only connected with worldly riches and wealth.

He also told them:

> "In my mission of inviting towards Allah and in conveying His message to you, I do not need your wealth or any position of high rank, and neither do I desire any payment from you. My true payment is with Allah and He is the Best to appreciate my task."

Hazrat Nooh عليه السلام tried his atmost that his unfortunate people should understand and heed his call and attain the Mercy of Allah, but they refused to heed. And the more efforts were made in conveying Allah's commands to them, the more became their hatred and enmity and the more they tried to cause him harm and difficulty in all possible manner. The elders among them ordered the younger ones not to discard the worship of the false gods *Suwaa*, *Yaghooth*, *Ya'ooq* and *Nasr*. Finally, becoming highly annoyed with Nabi Nooh عليه السلام, they said:

> "O Nooh عليه السلام, you have argued with us very much, and you should stop it now. Being now that punishment which you have promised us."

To this Nabi Nooh عليه السلام replied:

> " If Allah so wishes, He will bring forth that punishment and you will not be able to frustrate Him." (11.33)

In this manners when Nabi Nooh عليه السلام had completely despaired of them being recipients of *Hidaayat* and when their enmity and obstinacy had become very clear, and after having conveyed the Message of truth to them for nine-hundred and fifty years without any visible salutary effects, Nabi Nooh عليه السلام became greatly distressed. At that time by way of consolation, Allah said to him:

> "Take those (of them) that have believed as no one else among them will now believe and do not sorrowful over their actions." Then it became clear to Nooh عليه السلام that he had not failed in his duty of delivering the message and that fault actually lay with those who refused to believe. This was all as a result of their rebellious nature. Then being affected by their actions, he lifted up his hands to Allah and prayed: "O Lord do not leave of the unbelievers a single one on earth. For if thou dost leave any of them, they will mislead thy devotees and they will breed none but wicked ungrateful ones." (11.27)

Building the Ark

Allah accepted Nooh (*Alaihis Salãm*)'s prayer and in accordance with His law of deeds and rewards and announced the punishment for the rebellious ones and the stubborn rejecters of truth and by way of saving the obedient ones

ordered Nabi Nooh ﷺ to build a ship in order to save the lives of the believers from the coming punishment.

When Nabi Nooh ﷺ started building the ship, the non-believers used to jeer and scoff at him. Whenever they used to pass by where he was building the ship they used to say: "very well, when we shall start drowning, you and your followers will be able to be saved with this ship.

What a stupid idea!"

Nabi Nooh ﷺ, noticing their unmindfullness of the results of their actions and their courage in the face of their disobedience towards Allah, used to answer them in similar vein while keeping busy with his task of shipbuilding. As he knew what Allah had revealed to him of what is to take place:

> "O Nooh, you are in our protection. And in accordance with our revelation, build the ship and do not ask us about them they will all drown." (11:37)

At last the ship was built and the time for the coming of the punishment of Allah was near. Nabi Nooh ﷺ saw the first signs of it as water started gushing forth from the earth like fountains. Then came the revelation:

> To let those of his family members take their places on the ship, and to load onto the ship a pair of each animals, one male and one female.

In this manner a small group of about forty people boarded the ship, the sum total of those who believed in Nabi Nooh ﷺ.

Then the order was given for the heavens to open up and rain started falling and the fountains of the earth were ordered to open up and gush forth. With the grace of Allah

the ship started sailing until such time that all the rejecters of truth were drowned as a result of their evil deeds.

Mount Judy

When the punishment of Allah had been completed, the ship came to a standstill on Mount Judy.

> "And the matter was ended the Ark rested on Mount Judy and the word went forth: "Away with those who do wrong." (11:44)

The water started receding and drying up. The inhabitants of the ship once again put their feet ashore in safety. For this reason Nabi Nooh ﷺ is also know as the "second father of mankind' or "the second Adam." And it is perhaps also because of this that in *Hadith* he is mentioned as being the "first of the Messengers (*Rasuls*)."[1]

As for the where about of Mount Judy, the Qur'ãn only mentions the place where the ship came to a standstill. However according to some commentators on the *Towraat* Judy is the name of a mountain range which is found in ararat and the mountainous region of Georgia.

Important Conclusions

1. Every person is answerable for his every action. For this reason the righteous of a father cannot be hold responsible for the disobediẽnce of a son and neither can the holiness of a son be a compensation for the evils of a father.

---

1. The person on whom Allah's revelation comes is called a '*Nabi*' and the one who receives a new *Shariat* is called a '*Rasul*' (Messenger). Every *Rasul* is also a *Nabi* but it is not necessary that every *Nabi* will be a *Rasul*.

"Everyone acts according to his own disposition."

(17:84)

2. The company of evil ones is more dangerous than poison. And its result is nothing other than disgrace, loss and destruction. Just as righteousness is necessary for a person, so important is the company of the righteous. And just as it is necessary to avoid all evil, so also is it necessary to save yourself from the company of the bad ones.

3. It is not contrary to the rules of *Tawakkul* that a person should make provision for eventualities, but in fact it is the correct way to rely on Allah. For this reason the ship was built as a provision.

For Man it is necessary at first to make effort

And them if he wishes he may make *Du'a.*

As long as no effort was made by hand and might

Nooh ﷺ would not have found safely from the flood.

4. The Messengers of Allah although being *Ma'sum* (sinless) and innocent, they are still through their humanity capable of human faults. However, they do not continue on it but from Allah's side they are quickly made aware there of and made to stop. Further, those Messengers are not knowers of the unseen as can clearly be seen from the story of Nabi Nooh ﷺ.

5. Although the law of retribution for deeds committed is a law that is prevalent in every corner of the universe, it is not necessary that every crime or every deed of righteousness should be rewarded or punished this world. This is so because this world has been established as a world for deeds whereas the hereafter has been especially fixed for the reward and punishment. However, the punishment

for injustice and arrogance is given in some form or other in this world also.

Saying:

It is reported that Imam Abu Hanifah said that the unjust one and the proud arrogant one will meet his punishment in some form or other in this world before his death. Hence the stories of the people who opposed Allah's Messengers (*Alaihimus Salãm*) and the greatly unjust ones in history are eloquent proof of this.

The Deluge of Nabi Nooh ﷺ

The historians have mentioned the name of Nabi Nooh (*Alaihis Salãm*)'s son as being Kan'aan. This is in accordance with the *Towraat*. The Qur'ãn, however, is silent on this issue. But being silent on the name does not detract from the importance of the story. The conversation between Nabi Nooh ﷺ and his son is mentioned:

The son said (in reply to his father's offer to believe and board the ship):

> "I shall seek refuge on a mountain which will save me from the water." (Hood:43)

Some *Ulama* are of the opinion that this was not a true son of Nabi Nooh ﷺ and they then made two further claims: (a) Some say he was the son of Nooh (*Alaihis Salãm*)'s wife from a previous marriage who was reared by him (b) Some claim that the non-believing wife of Nabi Nooh ﷺ had deceived him and he was born.

The reason why these *Ulama* had resorted to these, unsubstantiated interpretations is the fact how can it be that the son of Nabi can be non-believer? What should be

remembered is that to bring the message of guidance to mankind. He is not required to use force to cause his children, his wife, family-members or members of his tribe to believe and submit to the message.

The Qur'ãn says to Rasulullah ﷺ:

> "You have not been a forceful ruler over them (the unbelievers)." (88:22)
>
> "You are not one to overance them by force. (50:45)

The truth of the matter is that Kan'aan was the son of Nabi Nooh ﷺ but due to his unbelieving mother who reared him and the effect of the family and the general environment there was a bad influence on him and he remained a non-believer in spite of being the son of messenger of Allah.

The Flood was it Universal or Local?

Did this flood come over the whole earth or was it merely a specific region that was flooded? Among the ancient *Ulama* as well as the modern *Ulama* there have always been two opinions on this issue. This is also the case with the *Ulama* of the Jews and the Christians.

According to some experts in astronomy and geologists the flood was only limited to that area where the people of Nabi Nooh ﷺ resided. This region consists of an area 140.000 square kilometre.

However, the correct version is this that the deluge was confined to a specific area and was not universal. The Qur'ãn only focussed on those details which were of importance as admonition or warning. It only wishes to point out to men of understanding that this incident in

history should be noted and never forgotten, that so many years ago a specific nation persisted with disobedience to Allah and rejected the guidance brought by Allah's chosen Messenger who was sent to them and in response Allah showed His power and caused the disobedient ones to be drowned while only a small group of believers were saved, with Nabi Nooh ﷺ.

> "Verily in that there is a warning for men of understanding."

The Age of Nabi Nooh ﷺ

The Qur'ãn clearly states that Nabi Nooh ﷺ continuous to preach to his people for nine hundred and fifty years.

> "We sent Nooh ﷺ to his people and he turned among them a thousand years excepts fifty."
>
> (29:14)

This life span of 950 years from a natural point of view seems quite illogical. It is however not impossible because at the beginning of this Universe there was not such an abundance of sorrows and worries or illnesses as we have today. Furthermore ancient history also admits that a few thousand years ago the natural life-span of man was much more than now. Hazrat Nooh (*Alaihis Salãm*)'s life-span of so many years should be understand to be one of those special gifts from Allah's side towards His messengers. In this regard the correct version is that was his life-span and there is no need to try to shorten his life by various interpretations.

In the Qur'ãn Nabi Nooh ﷺ is mentioned in 28 chapters and he is mentioned 43 times.

Hazrat Idrees عليه السلام

Nabi Idrees ﷺ is only mentioned twice in the Qur'ãn, once in *Surah Maryam* and once in *Surah Ambiya.*

> "And remember Idrees in the Book. Verily He was a true Nabi and we raise him to high rank."
>
> (19:56)

> "And Ismail and Idrees (*Alaihimus Salãm*) and *Zul-kifl* each of them was a greatly patient one."

Name and Offspring

As regards the name, family lineage and era of Nabi Idrees ﷺ, the Historians are greatly divided and after and after keeping all the different versions in front of us, we are unable to come to a verdict or to a view favoured by most. This is so because the Qur'ãn in view of its purpose of providing guidance for mankind, has omitted discussion on historical aspects and only focussed on his Prophet hood, his high rank and his high qualities. In similar fashion hadith reports do not go further than the Qur'ãn. For this reason whatever details we have are mostly Israeli reports, which because of their contradictory nature we put aside for the sake

of brevity. The opinion of one group of scholars is that Idrees ﷺ was born in the town of Babilon and that he grew up there and in the first part of his life he acquired knowledge from Nabi Sheeth bin Adam ﷺ when he reached the age of wisdom Allah endowed him with the office of Prophet hood.

He then started to spread the message of truth among the evil doers of his time. These evil doers did not need his call and opposed the Shariat of Nabi Idrees ﷺ and Nabi Sheeth ﷺ. Only a small group of people accepted the message of Islãm.

When Nabi Idrees ﷺ saw this, he decided to perform *Hijrat* from there and advised his followers also to migrate from there. The followers found it very hard to leave their home town, saying: "where will we find a home town like Babilon?"

Nabi Idrees ﷺ said to them by way of consolation: "If you are prepared to withstand difficulty in Allah's path, then you will find His Mercy is very wide. He will surely grant you a good exchange. Do not lose courage, and obey His commands."

After they had agreed to migrate Nabi Idrees ﷺ and his followers performed *Hijrat* in the direction of Egypt and along a part of the nile river they chose for themselves a place of residence. There he continued to spread the Message from Allah and invite towards the good while forbidding the evil. It is said that during his time an eloquent form of language was being spoken and also that through Allah's gift to him he was able to speak in most languages on earth. He used to convey the message to each nation in their own language. According to another report Nabi Idrees ﷺ was the first person to make use of the pen.

The Special Qualities

Apart from conveying the message of the Religion of Allah, Nabi Idrees ﷺ also taught people the civilized manner of running their civil affairs in the towns and villages and his disciples have for almost two centuries there after been responsible for inhabiting the towns. He also taught his disciples other forms of knowledge, for example philosophy and astronomy. It is said he is the first person to teach philosophy and astronomy as Allah had given him the knowledge of the heavenly bodies and their movements, the stars, their coming together and their separation together with their magnetic pull. Allah also made him a scholar of numeral and mathematics and if these arts had no been discovered by him, mankind would have had great difficulty in having acquired that knowledge.

He is also responsible for having promulgated various laws for various groups of people in society according to their various situations and divided the earth into four sections and for every one of the four sections appointed a ruler who had to rule over that section on condition that the Divine law brought by him would be uppermost in the legal system.

Synopsis of His Teachings

First of all he taught that everyone should believe in *Touheed*-the one-ness of Allah, and only He as the creator of the universe should be worshipped. One should busy himself with righteous deeds in this world in order to be saved in the hereafter. One should be disconnected from this world. In all matters and affairs justice should prevail. One should busy himself with the worship of Allah in the prescribed manner and should fast during the three middle

days of the lunar months. It is also required that *Jihad* be made against the enemies of Islãm, that *Zakah* should be given to the needy. Special care should be taken towards *Tahaarat* and cleanliness, and to avoid dogs and swine, as well as all intoxicants.

Future Prophets

He also informed his people that like him many other Prophets (*Alaihimus Salãm*) would appear in future for the worldly and spiritual guidance of mankind and that their outstanding features will be as follows:

They will be completely free of all evil. They will be praise worthy men of high virtues. They will have full knowledge of this world and the heavens, and will be aware of all the remedies for any part of this universe or all illnesses, which knowledge will come to them through Divine Inspiration and Revelation.

They will also be men whose prayers will be answered by Allah. The summary of their message will be the reform and rectification of this world.

The Khilafat of Nabi Idrees ﷺ

When Nabi Idrees ﷺ was made the ruler of this earth, he divided the inhabitants in three classes according to their knowledge and actions. These three classes were (a) the Priests (b) The Kings (c) The Subjects. Their ranks were fixes in this sequence. The priests were the highest in rank and they were only responsible to Allah in the affairs of the kings and the subjects. The next in rank were the kings who were responsible for the affairs of the state. The subjects were only responsible for there ownselves and were therefore in the third rank. These ranks were fixed according to their compulsory

duties and obligations and were not according to their family connections or tribal considerations.

Nabi Idrees عليه السلام used to continue to have these laws carried out diligently until the time came for his being "raised up to Allah."

The Few Special Points

Nabi Idrees عليه السلام had a ring on which was inscribed the following phrase: "Together with the faith in Allah, patience is the cause of success and victory. "On the griddle which he were around his body was written: "The true festival days are hidden in the carrying out of the commands of Allah. The perfection of *Deen* is connected with the *Shariat*. Kindness is the highest step for the perfection of the *Deen*."

At the time of funeral, the girdle worn around the waste of a person had this sentence inscribed on it: "The fortunate person is he who protects his self and the intercession for a man before Allah is his good deeds."

The Advices of Nabi Idrees عليه السلام

Many of the advices and sayings of Nabi Idrees عليه السلام are well known. Many of these are used like proverbs in various languages. Here are some of them.

1. To express adequate thanks for Allah's numerous bounties and favours is beyond man's capability.
2. Whosoever desires to reach perfection in knowledge and desires to be a door of righteousness, should never go near to the causes of ignorance and bad character. Don't you see that when a skilled artist wishes to sew something he takes a needle in his hand and not a drill. Thus one should at all times keep this principle in mind.

3. Showing kindness to someone in this world can lead to sorrow and to be boastful of Allah leads to regret.

4. For the remembrance of Allah and for the performance of righteous deeds a precondition is sincerity.

5. Do not take false oaths. And do not use the Name of Allah for taking oaths and do not force liars to swear and take oaths, because by so doing you become a partner in his wrong deed and the sin thereof.

6. Do not adopt a lowly profession as for example as for example receiving payment for allowing animals to copulate; fertilize and impregnate other animals.

7. Obey the kings, who have been appointed over you by the Prophets for the implementation of Allah's laws, remain humble in the presence of your elders and at all times keep your tongue wet with the praises of Allah.

8. Wisdom is the life of the Soul.

9. Do not be jealous over the good life others enjoy because this happy life only lasts a few days.

10. Whosoever seeks more than the necessities of life will never become satisfied and contented.

Some research scholars and biographers have tried to prove some similarity between Nabi Idrees ﷺ and Hermes, the Greek mythological figure. But this is wrong. Hermes is a figure of mythology who is noted for some wise sayings; whereas Idrees ﷺ was a Prophet of Allah.

Hazrat Hood عليه السلام

The People of Aad

The era of the people of Aad is taken to be a period of two thousand years before the Maseeh and in the Qur'ãn the people of Aad being mentioned to be "after the time of Nooh عليه السلام," seems to indicate that they were the successors of the people of Nooh عليه السلام. In fact they have also been noted to be the "first" people of Aad, and the word of '*Iram*' has also been connected to them.

The Area Inhabited

The central point of their residence was the land of 'Ahqauf', which is situated in the north of Hadramount, with Oman to its east and the Rub-'ul-Khaali the empty quarter to the north. Today, however, you will find nothing else in this area except sand and sand hills.

The Religion of Aad

The people of Aad were polytheists, idol-worshippers. In their general profession, like the people of Nabi Nooh عليه السلام they worshiped these idols and were noted for their sculpture and carving of these idols.

There is a saying by Sayeduna Abdullah bin Abbaas ﷺ to the effect that one of there idols was called Samood and another was called Hataar.

Hazrat Nabi Hood ﷺ

Because of the power of their country and their pride in their physical strength they considered themselves so highly placed that they completely forgot Allah, their creator, and started worshiping idols, made by their own hands and started performing such *Shaitanic* acts without any fear for Allah until Allah sent to them a messenger chosen from among themselves-Nabi Hood ﷺ.

Nabi Hood ﷺ was a member from one of their most noble and honoured families and tribes. He was of reddish white colour and a man of dignity, with a big beard.

The Message of Islãm

He conveyed the message of Allah's one ness among them and called them all to the worship of Allah, prohibiting them from all injustices and evil. However, the people did not listen to him and refused to heed his call. They rejected him and acted arrogantly towards him, asking him the question:

> "Who is there, stronger than as in power?"
>
> (5:41)

In spite of their rejection Nabi Hood ﷺ continued to call them towards the obedience to Allah, warning them against the punishment of Allah and explained to them how the people of Nooh ﷺ were punished for their disobedience and arrogance. He used to tell them:

> "O people be not proud and arrogant over your physical strength and your strong rule over

> others, but rather be grateful to Allah for having granted you such wealth and that after the people of Nooh ﷺ He had made you possessors of the earth. He had granted you a good life, removed all worries from you and granted you worldly wealth. So do not forget his bounties and favours. Stop worshiping your own hand made idols, which are not of any benefit to you, and cannot cause you any harm. Life and death, benefit and all harm tie only in the Hands of Allah.
>
> O people, accept the fact that you have disobeyed Him up to now, but even if today repent and return to Him, you know His Mercy is extremely wide and extensive and His doors of repentance are never closed. Seek His forgiveness and He will forgive you. Return to Him and He will grant you pardon and bless you with wealth and honour."

These preaching's of Nabi Hood ﷺ did not go down well with the people and they did not tolerate that any man from among them should accept his ideas, beliefs and deeds or in any way become a follower of his. Thus they decided to jeer and scoff at Nabi Hood ﷺ, calling him a stupid foot and began to reject his truths and reject all his arguments to prove his truth. They said to him:

> "O Hood you have not brought to one acceptable argument to prove the truth of your claims, and we are not prepared to leave aside our gods for your sake and neither are we prepared to believe in you." (5:35)

> "And we are not prepared to be caught by your trick to accept you as God's messenger. And we are not prepared to leave aside our Gods and the belief that they will one day be intercessors on our behalf with Allah the great."

Nabi Hood ﷺ replied:

> "O people, I am not a fool and I am not a mad man. In truth I am Allah's messenger. Allah has not chosen a mad man from among His servants for their guidance. He has chosen me to come to you so that in place of deviation, guidance might spread. For this momentous task he chooses from among His servants such a one who is suitable in all ways and who can deliver this service diligently."
>
> "And Allah knows best where he should place his Messenger ship." (6:124)

However, the obstinate opposition of the people and their intense enmity increased and Nabi Hood (*Alaihis Salãm*)'s clear and solid arguments had no effect upon them and there rejection of the truth became even more direct as they called him a mad and insane man, and played the fool with him.

They told him: "We see that since the time that you started to criticize our gods and ordered us to stop worshiping them, from that time your condition has become bad and deteriorated and through the prayers of our gods you have become insane. So as what else should we consider you?" They reckoned that through this kind of insulting words, no one will pay any attention to Nabi Hood ﷺ or listen to him with attention.

Nabi Hood ﷺ heard all these insults with tremendous tolerance and patience and then replied:

> "I make Allah my witness and you also as I announce that I am free of this belief that those gods have any power to cause me or anyone else any evil and I challenge those gods that it they have any such power, they should cause me harm. Through the grace of Allah I am a man of reason, a man of perception and wisdom and I only put my reliance in Allah in whose Hands the control of all living beings lies. He is the Lord of life and death and He will surely help me and keep me safe from all harm."

Afterwards after their continuous disobedience and enmity Nabi Hood ﷺ made this announcement that:

> "If that action by the people of Aad was going to continue, and if they were going to continue turn their backs towards his preachings and if no changes were going to come forth from their sides, and they were not going to heed my advices to them then in spite of the fact that I am at all times prepared to carry on the services which had been handed over to me, then most, certainly destruction was going to be the end result of your deeds. Very soon Allah will destroy them and will bring in their place another nation. They will not be able to cause Allah any harm because Allah has power and sovereignty over all things and the whole Universe is subservient to His power."

"O people, make use of your reasoning faculties. Take a lesson from what happened to the people of Nooh ﷺ and become subservient to Allah's commands. The Hand of predestined fate has already become clear. It is near at hand that your arrogance and pride will be mixed in the sand of the earth. When that time comes, there will be no other result except sorrow and regret and regret will then be of no use."

Nabi Hood ﷺ repeatedly tried to make them believe. "I am not your enemy. I am a friend of yours. I am not seeking wealth or position, but am interested in your salvation and success. I am not a deceives as for as Allah's message is concerned, but a faithful and trustworthy conveyer there of . I only convey to you what was told to me. And whatever I tell you, is for your own good fortune and is said for your everlasting salvation."

"You should not wonder that Allah's message should descend upon one of your people before from ancient times this has been Allah's *Sunnat* that for the sake of man's salvation and guidance one from among them is chosen who is made a messenger and addressed to inform him of Allah's pleasure and what causes His displeasure. Logic also demands that for the guidance of men such a person be chosen who is like them in speech and action, who knows their character and manners and is aware of their special features, and who has lived among them to whom they should feel attracted so that he can be their true guide with their interests at heart."

When and heard this, they were perplexed as they could not understand as to how they were to worship one God. How were they to discard all the gods of their fore fathers. This infuriated them. That would be a great insult to their

fore fathers. In anger they retorted how can those fore fathers now be declared polytheists and idol worshipers and non-believers in view of the fact that those gods were intercessors with Allah?

According to them belief in Hood ﷺ would mean an insult to their fore fathers and the gods, whom they accepted as a *Wassilah* and intercessors in the presence of Allah, and for this reason they worshiped these idols and pictures that the idols would become pleased and intercede on their behalf with Allah so that they could be saved from the punishment of Allah.

At last they rose up in anger against Nabi Hood ﷺ and annoyed with him, said to him: "You have threatened us with the punishment of your Lord and have frightened us by saying:

> "I fear for you of the coming of the punishment of a great day (that you become worthy of it). (26:135)
>
> "O Hood your advices will now not be heeded. If you are truly true in your words, then hastily bring on the punishment that your and our affair be settled."
>
> "So bring to us what you threatened as with if indeed you tell the truth." (7:70)

Nabi Hood ﷺ replied:

> "If that is your reply to my sincere and truthful advices, and you wish for the punishment to come, then know that punishment is not for away."
>
> "Verily the punishment and anger of your Lord has arrived." (7:71)

> "You people are not ashamed that you call upon a few idols formed by your own hands whose names you have fabricated and whom your fore fathers have believe to be their intercessors without any proof from Allah and now you turn away from my clear proofs and arguments, asking for Allah's punishment to come. If you are so eager for it to come, then wait for it for I shall also await it. The time for it is indeed near at hand."

The Qur'ãn states:

> "Dispute you with me over names you have devised you and your fathers without authority from Allah?"
>
> Then wait, I am amongst you, also waiting.
>
> (7:71)

The Punishment

Finally after the intense disobedience of the tribe of Aad, the people of Hood ﷺ and their rejection and enmity against the preachings of Nabi Hood ﷺ, and as a result of the retribution of their actions and the time came for their punishment. The anger of Allah was stirred and from Allah's side a great drought descended upon the land. This caused them great concern and discomfort and they appeared quite helpless and destitute.

At this stage a great feeling of sympathy for them in Nabi Hood ﷺ once again incited him to call them to the path of truth after previous disappointment. He again called them to believe in his advices as the only way towards salvation in this world and the here after; otherwise they will

regret it. But again his call was in vain and had no effect upon them. In fact their rejection and enmity increased even more. Hence thereafter a dreadful punishment descended. For eight days and seven nights a terrible strong wind blew over them and flattened everything among them. At that time strong and well-built men who used to be proud of their strength and their disobedience, appeared so devoid of senses and movements as the strong wind brought down strong trees and uprooted them. All of them were removed from the surface of the earth, to become a sign of warning for future generations. The curse of this world and the next was let loose among them and set over them while Nabi Nooh ﷺ and the small group who followed him were saved from the hurricane through Allah's mercy and grace. This is the story of the first Aad which holds in itself a great lesson and which is a call from Allah to mankind to follow his instructions. It warns against the disobedience and rebellion against the orders of Allah and against the unfortunate results of arrogant over temporary time of wealth living.

The Death of Nabi Hood ﷺ

It is reported by Sayeduna Ali ﷺ that Nabi Hood (*Alaihis Salãm*)'s grave is in Hadramout at a place called Kasheef Ahmar. At the headside of the grave is a *Jhau* tree. This report seems to be correct and it seems sensible because the habit at of the people of Aad ﷺ was near Hadramout and he continued to live near there after his people were destroyed and it seems logical that he might have passed away there.

Lessons

When Allah's chosen servants is appointed to reform the condition of a people, and proceeds to advise them on

the right path, he does not pay attention to the Jeering and scoffing of those very ones for whose welfare he acts. Such a servant does not become disheartened and infuriated and discard his good deed in their welfare. Above all a most important point in this regard is this that he does not ask for any benefit for himself, no does he expect any form of remuneration from them. His way of life continues to be superior and above theirs.

The Main cause for the hatred and enmity of the people against the Prophets and reformers has always been this that criticism has been expressed against the customs of the forefathers and their self-made idols. This evil has always been very destructive for the spiritual life of people and has always been a great stumbling block towards their everlasting prosperity and success.

In the field of conveying Allah's message one should always exchange good for evil and in response to harsh talk one should always give sweet words in reply.

However, the conveying messenger when faced with continuous rejection and rebellious obstinacy should also remind them of the Divine law of 'retribution' and make them aware of the results of evil. Hence if there is continuous general rejection and evil deeds from their side, then in the end the wrath and anger of Allah will come into motion and bring destruction upon them.

The Mention in the Qur'ãn

The story of`Nabi Hood ﷺ is mentioned in *Surah A'raaf, Hood* and *Shu'araa.* The people of Aad is also mentioned is *Surah A'raaf, Hood, Muminoon, Shu-araa, Fussilat, Ahqaaf, At-Thahiiyaat, Al-Qamar, Al-Haaeqqah.*

Nabi Saulih عليه السلام

The People of Thamood

The people of Thamood were those people who together with Nabi Hood were saved from the destruction that descended upon the people of Aad عليه السلام. Their offspring became known as the 'Aad the second' and also as the Thamood of Iram.

The Habitat of Thamood

The place where Thamood settled was the land of '*Hijr*' which lies between Hijaz and Syria in the valley of Qura.

The ruins of the buildings of Thamood are present there till this day. A special feature of their buildings was that their houses were hewn out of the mountains from which we can deduce that the people of Thamood were especially gifted in the art of building and architecture.

The Era of Thamood

No clear verdict can be given for the era of Thamood with any amount of certainty but what can be said is that their era was before the time of Sayeduna Ibraheem عليه السلام.

The Religion of Thamood

Like their predecessors the people of Thamood too were idol worshippers. Apart from the one Allah, they also worshipped numerous false gods. For this reason one from among themselves were chosen in the form of Nabi Saulih عليه السلام for advising them and guiding them on the right path as Allah's Messenger عليه السلام. His task was to inform them that the whole universe is witness to the fact that Allah is but One. He reminded them of all Allah's favours upon them and preached to them that none but He is worthy of worship.

The Significance of 'Qur'ãnic Stories

It is the general *Sunnat* of the Qur'ãn that for the sake of the guidance of mankind it tells the stories of previous nations and their religious guides us a form of advise and admonition for the present, so that it may become known to men that those who rejected the call of the Prophets and Jeered and scoffed at them, then Allah perhaps on the demand of the Prophet and sometimes of His Own will brought such signs are generally called '*Moujizah*'. But if after such sign had appeared the people did not stop their rejection of the Prophet and continued with their enmity and hatred of him, then the punishment of Allah descended and destroyed them. These events would them remain a lesson and a warning for coming generations.

The she-camel of Allah

Nabi Saulih عليه السلام continues to preach to his people and advise them but his preaching had no effect upon them. In fact their enmity continues to increase even more and their opposition to truth became stronger. They just would not leave aside their idol-worship. Only a small group of them accepted

the call and believed. The leaders of the people and the rich ones from among them remained on idol worship. Instead of expressing gratitude for all the favours of Allah, they tended to be extremely ungrateful. They used to play the fool with Nabi Saulih عليه السلام and used to say:

> "O Saulih If indeed we were worshippers of false hood and rejectors of Allah's true Religion and if indeed the system on which we are was not loved by Him, then today we would not be possessors of such abundance of wealth, fertile green orchards and gardens and other bounties. Look at your own self and the poor condition of your followers and their want and then decide who is Allah's favourite, we or you?"

Nabi Saulih عليه السلام used to reply:

> "Do not boast of your worldly wealth and comforts and do not jeer or scoff at Allah's true Messenger عليه السلام. For if your arrogance and enmity is to continue then within a twinkling of an eye all that can be made to disappear. Then you will not remain and neither will your worldly possessions. All these are Allah's favours and for as long as the acquirer thereof is prepared to express gratitude and be submissive to Him. And indeed these things can be a curse and a punishment if they are held with pride and arrogant boasting. It is wrong to believe that the possession of worldly riches is necessarily a sign of Allah's pleasure and delight."

The people of Thamood found it hard to believe that one from among themselves can become Allah's Messenger ﷺ and that he should dictate to them the commands of Allah. Greatly surprised they exclaimed:

> What, has the Message been sent to him (of all persons) among us. (38:8)

In other words, if Allah had to send down His Message, we would have been more suitable to receive it and not Saulih. Sometimes they used to address the poor members of his community:

> "Are you certain that for sure Saulih is the Messenger of Allah?" (7:75)

The Muslims used to reply:

> "Indeed, we believe in the Message brought by him."

Then the rejectors used to say:

> "Indeed for our part, We reject what you believe in." (7:76)

The arrogant and rebellious people of Nabi Saulih ﷺ refused to accept the call of their Nabi and requested a special sign from Allah's side. For this reason Nabi Saulih ﷺ prayed to Allah for a sign and he replied to them saying: The sign you required has come to you in the form of a she-camel. Note that if you are going to cause her any harm, it could lead to your destruction. Allah has appointed a fixed period for you and for the she-camel to make use of the water-to each his own time. One day for you and one day for the she-camel."

The Qur'ãn has called it '*Naaqatullah*' Allah's she-camel. Actually all the creatures on earth are Allah's but because Thamood asked for a sign from Allah which came in the form of this she-camel, for this reason as a sign of its special honour it has been called '*Naaqatullah*' and by calling it '*Lakum Aaytun*' it was meant to convey the idea that it carries with it some special importance. However the people of Thamood were unable to tolerate its presence for very long among them and one day after planning some more they killed it. When Nabi Saulih ﷺ came to know what they had done he was greatly saddended and exclaimed: "O Unfortunate people, In the end you were unable to bear her presence patiently. Now await Allah's punishment.' Within three days such a punishment will come that you will not be able to ward off, and this punishment will destroy you for ever."

The Punishment Over Thamood

The initial signs of the punishment started appearing from day break of the next day. The first day all their faces went yellow just as happens in the initial stages of intense fear. The morning of the next day their faces turned red as if that was the second stage of fear. The next day their faces appeared blackened and darkness were strewn across their faces. This was the third stage of fear, after which only death awaits.

After these three days the appointed time had arrived and at night a frightful noise was heard which destroyed the life of every one as they were. The Qur'ãn refers to this noise as "*Sau'iqah*" (crashing thunder) and at another place called it "*Raa'jifah*" (which causes on earthquake), and somewhere else as "*Tau'qhiyah*" (freight-ful) and somewhere else a "*Sayhah*" (a shout).

At one place this punishment descended upon Thamood and at the same time destroyed its inhabitants and their habitation, dealing with the pride and arrogance of the evil-doers and at another place Nabi Saulih ﷺ and the believers were saved and protected.

Warning and Admonition

This has been the *Sunnat* of Allah. However from this *Sunnat* the Message of our Nabi Muhammad ﷺ has been excepted. This is so because Rasulullah ﷺ had declared: "I have prayed to Allah not to send such a punishment over my *Ummat* which will be general. And Allah has accepted this plea of mine." The Qur'ãn confirms it thus:

> "But Allah will not send on their a general penalty while you was among them." (5:33)

However, the Nation or people who demands a special sign from Allah on this condition that if that sign appears among them then they will believe, and afterwards still fail to believe, their destruction is a matter of certainty and Allah will not pardon them until such time that they repent and then accept Allah's deen. Otherwise the punishment will destroy them and they will become an example to others to come afterwards.

This is a great mistake to think that a man in wealthy circumstances, enjoying worldly grandeur and high rank is a person enjoying Allah's favours and that his wealthy position is necessarily a sign of Allah's pleasure.

Hazrat Ibraheem عليه السلام

The Mention in the Qur'ãn

Because of the fact that the Qur'ãn and its Message of guidance is called the Ibraheemi Message, the Qur'ãn at numerous places mentions the name of Nabi Ibraheem عليه السلام in both the Makkan and Madinian *Surahs*. Thus in 35 *Surahs* in 63 verses Nabi Ibraheem عليه السلام is mentioned.

Name of the Father

In history as well as in the Torah Ibraheem's father's name is given as being 'Taareekh' and according to the Qur'ãn his father is called 'Azar. In this regard the *Ulama* of *Tafseer*, and western orientalists have hold lengthy discussions. But among those various arguments brought forth many are artificial in nature because, since the Qur'ãn had clearly mentioned Azar as being the father of Ibraheem عليه السلام, why should we become influenced by the guest-work and uncertain deductions of the scholars of genealogy and the Bible and thereafter declare the truthful statements of the Qur'ãn to be metaphorical or worse than that, to give other interpretations to those verses. Which true necessity or *Shar'ie* need forces us to do that- the simplest and safe way out is to accept what the Qur'ãn says, whether Azar is his real name or his nick-name.

Ibraheem عليه السلام *and the other Prophets*

Joined to the story of Nabi Ibraheem عليه السلام is the story of the Prophet Loot عليه السلام, his uncle's son as well as his sons Ismaeel and Ishaaq (*Alaihimus Salãm*). The details of their stories will appear under discussion on their lives. At this stage we shall only refer to them by the way.

The Greatness of Ibraheem عليه السلام

Due to the high position Hazrat Ibraheem عليه السلام holds among the Prophets and Messengers, his story is told in various ways in various places in the Qur'ãn. If in one place it is mentioned in summarised form the same event is related at another place in more detail and in some places various descriptions are given with the aim of highlighting his admirable qualities.

According to the Torah, Hazrat Ibraheem عليه السلام was on inhabitant of a village in Iraq called 'Ur' He belonged to the people of Fiddaan. His people were idol worshipper. In the Gospel of St. Barnabas there is a clear statement that his father was a carpenter who used to make wooden idols for the various tribes of his people which he used to sell to them.

However from the very beginning Allah gave him insight and guidance and he realized that the idols could neither see nor hear and neither could they answer the call of the afflicted. Such idols could not give any benefit, nor cause any harm. There was no difference between those idols and wooden toys.

He used to see how his father used to make those life less, sculpture pieces with his own hands and how he used to construct the nose, ears, face and eyes according to his own fancies and used to see how he sold it to the buyers. He then thought: "Can that be God?" Or can such an idol be considered an image of God?"

When Ibraheem ﷺ saw how his people were involved in idol worship, star worship and the worship of the heavenly bodies, so much so that there remained no place in their hearts for Allah's One ness and absoluteness, and that they had cast aside the belief in Allah's Oneness and uniqueness, he took courage and while relying on Allah alone announced to them:

> "O people, what is this that I see you worshipping idols made by your own hands. Are you so asleep in your negligence that out of lifeless wood you prepare forms, that if they are not made according to your wishes, you break them up and mould other forms. You then, having made them, considering them to possess the ability to bring harm or benefit. Stop these nonsensical acts. And believe in Allah's Oneness."

"Bend in obedience before Him, the creator of all the universe." However the people did not heed his call. And because they were deprived of listening to the truth, they started to play the fool with the Messenger of Allah, and became more and more stubborn and disobedient.

Preaching to His Father

Nabi Ibraheem ﷺ noticed that the central point of the people's idol-worship came out of his own house and that Azar's idol-worship and idol making was the basis for their actions. For this reason it seemed logical that his conveying the message of truth should begin from his own family home. Hence he addressed his father Azar:

> "O father, the way of worshipping God and manner of acquiring knowledge of Him, which

you have chosen and which is being portrayed as the ways of the ancient fathers, these are all wrong and false. The correct path of truth is only that to which I call you. O my father! Only the belief in the Oneness of Allah is the path of salvation-not that which you have made your own hands and worship of idols. Discard that path and accept the path of the Oneness of Allah so that you may acquire the pleasure of Allah in this world and the everlasting happiness of the hereafter."

Unfortunately these words of advice had no effect upon Azar. In fact he started to threaten the young man: "O Ibraheem, if you do not desist from speaking evil of our gods, I shall stone you to death.

When Ibraheem ﷺ saw the matter had gone too far in this sense that on the one side he has to honour his father while on the other hand there rested on hear the responsibility of conveying of the Message, he considered the matter clearly and decided to do that which was in line with what is expected from a chosen servant and on exalted Messenger of Allah. He desisted from answering the harsh words of the father with harsh words. He desisted from using words of humiliation and insult and in fact replied with softness and mildness.

"O Father, if that is your reply to me, then today I great you with Salãm. I cannot cast aside Allah's true religion and the path of truth and neither can I ever worship your idols. Today I depart from you but will continue to beg to Allah to pardon your faults, that you may be guided aright and thus be saved from Allah's punishment."

Calling His People

After the debate with his father, and after it became clear that Azar was not inclined to listen to his son's call and invitation towards guidance, Ibraheem decided to more away from him and to widen the scope of his invitation towards Islãm. He therefore did not only address his father but address his message to all the people. However, how would the people discard the practices of their fore-fathers?

The people refused to listen to Ibraheem and like the idols they also became deaf to his pleas. They acted like blind, deaf and dumb beings. When Ibraheem insisted on an answer to his question as to what benefit or harm these idols could deliver to them, they replied:

> "We are not keen to argue with you over these things. We only know this that our fore fathers had been worshipping them all along and we shall continue to do so."

The Ibraheem drew attention to the One God and said to them:

> "But as for me, "I make an enemy of your Gods. In other words I am without any fear of your idols and declare war against them. If they are able to take any revenge against me, let them try. I only take as my Lord, He who created the whole universe. He who created me and guided me and feed me and gives me to drink. When I am sick he heals me. He has my life and death in His Hands and for my fault, I hope He will on the day of *Qiyaamat* pardon me and I pray to Him: "O My Lord grant me the ability to make the correct judgement and join

me into the ranks of the righteous ones and grant me truth in my speech and make me of the heris of Paradise."

However Azar and his people were under no circumstances prepared to accept the truth and in their rejection there of exceeded all limits.

Worship of the Stars

Together with their idol worship the people of Nabi Ibraheem ﷺ also worshipped the stars and it was their belief that their life and death, their sustenance, their benefit and their losses, their years of drought and scarcity, their success and conquests, defeat and their destruction-in fact all the affairs of this universe are affected, and controlled by the movements of the stars. They also believed that these effects are caused by these stars and for this reason it is necessary to acquire the pleasure of these heavenly bodies and therefore they worshipped these bodies in order to acquire the pleasure of these heavenly bodies.

Therefore Nabi Ibraheem ﷺ in the same manner that he tried to prove to them the futility of worshipping their false idols as gods, as against worship of the Divine being, he also tried to prove to them the futility of worshipping their heavenly idols in the form of these stars. He did this by indicating to them the inconsistent nature of these bodies and explained to them that it is wrong to believe that these heavenly bodies have any divine powers. But when one remembers that these people were so frightened of their idols that whosoever spoke ill of them would be completely destroyed by the wrath and anger of the gods, you can imagine how difficult it was to create any idea in their minds against the worship of heavenly bodies. Therefore he hit upon a novel way of appealing to their minds:

> "It was a starry shining night with one star shining especially bright. Sayeduna Ibraheem ﷺ looked at it and explained: "Is this my Lord?"

His question was aimed at the fact that if the stars were capable of creating anything, then this star would be foremost in that respects as he was most shining.

But then after a fixed time of shinning, this star set and disappeared from the sky and out of view without the ability to continue shining above the horizon for any period longer, them Nabi Ibraheem ﷺ said: "I love not those who disappear." In other words, those who undergo such changes, more than myself, cannot be my Lord and Creator.

He thereafter looked at the moon shining in all its splendour and asked: "Is this my Lord?" He asked this question because the moon was shinning brightly and lighting up the whole world and if one is to consider the heavenly bodies as being one's Lord, why should it not be made the Lord as the moon seems more fitting for that post.

Then at the time of daybreak it was time for its shine to fade and for the moon to disappear from the sky and from view. Ibraheem ﷺ exclaimed in a sentence whereby he rejected the moon as a god and drew attention to the One Living Allah as creator. He said: "If my Lord does no guide me aright, then I too would have been of those gone astray."

So much he said and remained quiet. There was one more step in this practical demonstration and the people had one more weapon they could bring up. The starry night was finished. The stars and the moon had set. Now it was time for the sun to rise in all its splendour as it rose above the horizon. Seeing this Ibraheem ﷺ inquired. "Is this my Lord. For this one is the biggest of all the heavenly bodies and has the biggest effect in the heavenly system?" But after shining

the whole day and lighting up the whole world the sun started to decline and withdraw from the land as darkness started slowly to descend until at last the sun completely disappeared from view. This was the time for Ibraheem ﷺ to reveal the reality of his demonstration and to silence his opponents that if these bodies had within them the capability of being gods, then how is it that they undergo such changes-more than human beings and if they were gods why do they shine and then set after a time. Why do they not continue shining? Why is it that the light of the smaller stars were made insignificant by the moon's light? And why did the sun cause the moon to appear as if it was without any light?

He said:

> "O people, I am free of this wrong belief and I am free of this life of '*Shirk*'. I turned my face only to the One Allah who created heavens and earth. I am upright to Him and not one of the polytheists."

Now the people understood the demonstration and has broken down all our weapons and destroyed all our arguments. How are we now able to reject his strong proofs and what are answers to his arguments? They were completely helpless to respond and instead of accepting truth, they started to argue with him and warning him of the wrath of the gods who would take revenge on him for his insults and warning him that he would have to pay for his insulting the idols.

Ibraheem ﷺ replied: "Do you argue with me and threaten me with the wrath of the gods? Allah has guided me to the correct path and you have nothing with you except the path of false hood. I do not fear your gods. Whatever Allah

shall desire, that will happen. Your idols can do absolutely nothing. Have you received no advice against those idols. Yet you have no fear of disobeying Allah and associating those idols with Him. And you have no authority for that at all. And now you desire that I as a believer in Allah, the creator of this whole universe should fear for the wrath of your gods. If only you can understand as to who of us is the reformer and who the evil doer.

The life of safety is for that one who has faith in Allah, the One God, and who is free of all '*Shirk*' and that is the way of the Lord.

This is Allah's great argument which He sent through the tongue of Nabi Ibraheem ﷺ against the polytheism of the idol-worshippers and against worship of the heavenly bodies. This gave Ibraheem the upperhand in combat with his people. Finally when the people remained steadfast in their wrong form of worship Nabi Ibraheem ﷺ made an announcement of war against those idols saying to them: "With regard to your idols I shall walk such a path that will cause you great annoyance."

In the Qur'ãn his promise to them is given thus:

> "By Allah, in your absence I have a plan for your idols after you go away and turn your faces."
>
> (21:57)

The next phase of this story is this that when Ibraheem ﷺ had spent all his energies in trying to get his people to discard idol-worship, he realized they would not desist. Their priests and leaders had cast the fear into their hearts that if they were ever going to reject those idols, the gods would become angry and in revenge destroy them by way of punishment. The father Azar and the people were not

prepared to discard their belief in the power of the gods. In fact the priests and leaders made them even more stead fast in those beliefs. Hence Sayeduna Ibraheem ﷺ thought of a plan which would show them that in reality their idols were only forms made out of wood and stone, which were dumb, deaf and blind and also make them realize that whatever their priests had told them was completely wrong and without any substance. If such a plan could be effected, his task in conveying the message would be achieved.

Therefore he worked out a plan without informing anyone of it, but only telling various members: "I have a secret plan for your idols." As if he was saying to them: "If your idols have any power as you claim, then they will be able to frustrate me in my plan; and face me to discard my plan."

The people did not pay much attention to his warning. It so happened that special festival day arrived when all of them left the town to take part in it. Some people even insisted that Ibraheem ﷺ also come along. He refused and when they insisted, he looked at the stars and said: "I am sick." They thought he was affected by some ill-omen of the stars and left him alone. When the whole people were busy with the festival, Ibraheem ﷺ thought the time had come to put his plan into action of showing them the helplessness of the idols. He proceeded to the temple of the big idol and there he found a lot of sweet meats, and fruits spread out in front of all the idols, He addressed the idols, in a mocking way: All this is placed before you, why do you no eat?" Then again even" more jeering at them: "I am speaking to you. What is the matter? Why do you not answer?"

Then with an axe he started to smash all the idols and placed the axe against the shoulder of the big idol. The Qur'ãn quotes Ibraheem ﷺ thus: "Then did he turn to their gods and said:

> Will ye not eat? (of the offerings before you)?
> What is the matter with you that ye do not speak?
> Then did he turn upon them, striking them with the right hand." (37:91—93)

Some where else 'the Qur'ãn says:

> "So he broke them to pieces (all) but the biggest of them, that they night turn to it." (21:58)

When the people returned from their festival day, they found the smashed idols in the temple and were greatly in furiated; asking each other what is this. Some of those to whom he had said that he has a plan against their gods, were also present. These people declared that this was the work of Ibraheem ﷺ who was an enemy of the idols.

When the priests and leaders heard this, they were even more infuriated and demanded that Ibraheem ﷺ be brought before the people that they can see the evil-doer.

Then Ibraheem ﷺ was brought before the people, they asked him in a nice manner:

> "Did you do this to our gods, O Ibraheem?"

Ibraheem ﷺ thought of this as a good moment for him and for which he had done all that. This was a good opportunity to inform the public of the wrong beliefs of the priests and religions leaders so that the public could see that whatever those leaders had taught them were only lies and deceit. He thought I should tell them this is the work of the big idol. Ask him. In response they will probably reply: How can an idol speak. If that happens, I have reached my aim. Then I can explain to them the correct beliefs in front of every one, and explain

to them that they are all involved with falsehood. Hence he replied to their question:

> "May, this was done, this is the biggest one. Ask them if they can speak." (21:63)

What answer could be forthcoming from such an argument. The priests and religions leaders were dumbstruck and filled with annoying regret. They felt disgraced and thought about a proper reply. The whole public saw the whole episode and at last all of them had to admit to themselves that Ibraheem ﷺ was not an evildoer but that they were the wrong-doers for believing such false-hood without any proof and finally with shame they had to admit:

> "O Ibraheem, you know very well that these idols cannot speak. "They are life less statues."

In this manner Ibraheem (*Alaihis Salãm*)'s argument was a success and the enemies had to admit that they were unjust evildoer and in front of the general public had to admit that the idols could not speak and more than that, they did not have the power to cause any harm or benefit. Once again Ibraheem indicated to them that if that is how the idols were, them how can they be accepted as gods. It is a pity that they could not understand so much and it was as if their reasoning powers had failed.

Ibraheem ﷺ said to them:

> "Do you leave aside Allah and worship such as which cannot benefit you or harm you in the least? From on you and upon your false gods which you worship besides Allah. Do you not reason?" (37:95—96)

The result of this preaching of Ibraheem ﷺ should have been that the whole nation was to repent of their evil

deeds and wrong beliefs and to choose the correct path but what happened was that their hearts' crookedness, their rebellious nature and disobedience and obstinacy and their inner evil and iniquity did not allow that to happen. On the contrary they all started shouting for revenge against Ibraheem, that if they were in search of the pleasure of the gods, They should punish him for his insulting remarks. They called for Ibraheem to be burnt to death in order to stop his preaching of his religious beliefs.

Invitation to the King

With all this happening the news reached the King who at that time was known as Namrud. He was not only their King but people also considered him as a Divine Being and a god. Like the others they also considered him as a god and worshipped him as such. They also showed great respect to him as he was not only a sovereign King but also a man endowed with excellent reasoning qualities.

Namrud, when he came to know of these events, started worrying that if these preaching activities of the Messenger, Ibraheem عليه السلام, was going to continue in this fashion, his claim Divinity, Kingship and Lordship will be rejected by the people and it will lead to the passing away of his kingdom just like the religion of the forefather. Hence, he thought, it would be much better if this story was going to be finished off.

Therefore he ordered that Ibraheem عليه السلام be brought before him in his court. When this was done he asked Ibraheem عليه السلام:

> "Why do you oppose the religion of your fore fathers? And why do you refuse to accept me as your Lord?"

Ibraheem ﷺ replied:

"I am a worshipper of the One True Allah. I do not associate anyone unto Him. The whole world and Universe is His creation. And He is their creator and Lord. You are also just one human being like we are. How can you be God? And how can these blind, deaf and dumb wooden idols be God. I am on the right path and you all on the wrong path. So how can I ever discard my duty of conveying the truth? And how can I accept the religion of your fore fathers which they invented of their own selves?"

Namrud then asked Ibraheem ﷺ:

"If you have another god besides me, then explain and describe Him to me. Describe those qualities of His which are not in me."

Ibraheem ﷺ replied:

"My Lord is he in whose hand lies life and death. He gives life and He causes to die."

Namrud in his crooked understanding could not properly understand life and death. He said: "Life and death also lies in my hands. "By way of demonstration he gave an order to an executioner to strike the neck of an innocent person and kill him. The executioner immediately carried out the command. Then he had a person, who had previously been sentenced to death brought forth from jail and set him free.

Then turning to Ibraheem he said:

"Can you see how I give life and death?"

"What is so special about your Lord?"

Nabi Ibraheem ﵇ understood that either Namrud was unaware of the true meaning of giving life and death or that he was trying to deceive the subjects so that they could not understand that to give was not what he meant, but that in actual fact giving life was to bring someone from non-existence into existence. Similarly to save someone from being hanged did not mean your having the power of death or not. Being the possessor of death means to have the capability of taking the soul of a person from his body.

Ibraheem ﵇ thought that if he was going to continue this discussion on the philosophy of life and death with Namrud, it would give him more chance to mislead and deceive the people and Ibraheem ﵇ realized he would not reach his aimed intention of beating his argument and silencing him. He realized his aim was not to debate and argue for the sake of argument but to cast belief into the hearts of people. Therefore he chose another plan with an argument about something everyone can observe every day and about which they were quite aware:

He said:

> "My Lord is He who daily brings forth the sun from the East and takes it to the west. If you claim to be a god, then bring forth the sun from the west and take it to the East to set."

Hearing this Namrud became Jumb-founded and silent. And in this way through the tongue of Ibraheem ﵇ Allah's argument over Namrud was fully established.

Why was Namrood dumbstruck and why was there no chance of further misleading his people at that stage? The answer is that the meaning of this proof was that Ibraheem

ﷺ actually told him: "I believe in such a being about whom I believe that the whole Universe and the whole system in operation in this universe was created by Him and He has made this system according to His own wisdom in such a way that not a single thing in it can move from its place before its fixed time. Just look at the sun and how much effect it has on this earth and the benefits. Among other things Allah had fixed a special system for its rising and setting. Even if the sun should desire a thousand times to move outside the scope of that system, he will not be able to do so, because its control lies in the Hands of Allah. And whatever that Allah desires, He can do. However He only does that which His wisdom demands.

This means that Namrud had two ways of answering: He could either say: I have full control over the sun and I have established this whole system. But he did not because he himself did not believe that he himself had created the universe or that the movements of the sun were under his control. He only claimed himself to be a god among his people.

Or he could have said:

> "I do not believe this world to have been created by anyone. The sun is an independent god. He has many powers.

But he did not say this because if he did then Ibraheem (*Alaihis Salãm*)'s objection and arguments against that would re appear, which he uttered at the time of rejecting the Divine nature of the sun, that if the sun was a god, then why is it that more than in the priests, so many changes takes place in it until it sets and disappears from view. A god does not change and disappear. Moreover does it have the ability that if it wishes, it can rise or set before or after its fixed time?

The third thing he could have done was to accept the challenge of Ibraheem ﷺ and then brought forth the sun from the west.

But because Namrud was incapable of doing of these three things and was unable to answer and for this reason he was dumb-struck without being able to reply.

And so Nabi Ibraheem ﷺ first of all called his father to Islam and delivered the Message of truth to him. There after he started with a general and public call to the people, calling them to the straight path, showing them some natural signs as proof of the truth of his message. In soft and sweet words bringing forth strong arguments and proofs he exhibited the truth to them. In the end he debated with the King Namrud, showing him that Divinity and Lordship was only for Allah, the One God, and indicating to him that the world's greatest kings and emperors have not got the right to put himself up as a rival or associate of Allah. They are all His creation who are bound between existence and non-existence. However, although, Namrud and Azar had been silenced without any reply to his arguments and although the people were forced to admit to themselves and in the case of the idols were forced to admit by mouth that whatever Ibraheem ﷺ said was true, yet they failed to accept the straight path and turned away from truth. On the contrary, being affected by their regret and humiliation, they were enraged and infuriated. They all agreed unanimously, that for the sake of revenge on behalf of their idols and in reply for the insult against their fore fathers, Ibraheem ﷺ should be burnt to death as that was the most suitable punishment for those crimes in their eyes.

The Fire becomes Cold

Having reached this stage all Nabi Ibraheem (*Alaihis Salãm*)'s effects were finished and now in response to his solid arguments and proofs the material strength of the powers that be began to show their strength. His father had become his enemy; the whole nation stood against him and so also the King opposed him. From all sides the voices of opposition against him were raised-with cries for revenge and retaliation. At such a time could come to his aid and how was help going to come to him?

However Nabi Ibraheem عليه السلام did not mind to stand alone and without any fear and regret tolerated the taunts of the opposition and still continued to proclaim the truth and inviting to the path of guidance. But at such a delicate and dangerous time, when all his material assistance were exhausted and when it appeared as if there were no support or help, Ibraheem عليه السلام had such a pillar of strength on which to full back-such a pillar which may be called the greatest supporter of all supporters-viz. The support of Allah, the Almighty. At that time this Allah did not allow His great Messenger and spiritual guide to the people to remain without support. He frustrated all the plans of the enemy.

What happened was that Namrud chose a special place where for several days continuously he had lit a fire so much so that the coals of the fire caused everything around it to be burnt. And when they were convinced that now there was not possible way for Ibraheem عليه السلام to escape alive from such a fire, they put Ibraheem عليه السلام in a catapult and shot him into the fire.

Just at that time, the one who greats the fire the quality of burning, ordered the fire to refrain from having the burning affect on Ibraheem عليه السلام and in spite of flames still raging to become cool and safe for Ibraheem عليه السلام. At that very moment

the fire became "cool and safe" for Nabi Ibraheem عليه السلام. The enemies could do him no harm and Nabi Ibraheem عليه السلام came out of the blazing fire, safe and sound.

At this stage of the story the religious minded person will find it possible to accept the episode of the fire becoming 'cool and safe' for Ibraheem عليه السلام as being acceptable and correct without any reservations because he has already accepted that whatever the Qur'ãn states is based upon the revelation and that it was bought to us through a Messenger whom he considers truthful and sinless. And that whatever that Messenger conveyed to us is in accordance with Divine Revelation. Even though the event may seem irrational but in the light of reason the events are still not impossible. This is so because the truthful informer of these events, whose every aspect of his life has been examined and one has become completely convinced of his truth fullness, and of the truth of his information, and in the words of Heraclius, the emperor of the Roman Empire: "The person who does not speak lies to people and does not deceive them in their affairs, will definitely not fabricate and does not deceive them in their affairs, will definitely not fabricate any lie against Allah, nor will he have the courage to do so.

And moreover, in religious life the truth of the matter is that in every deed where everything is found to be rational and in accordance with reason, if there are some matters which are surprising from a rational point of view while still not being impossible, should be accepted and believed. At such a time one should accept the words of him who brought the revelation as truth and one should believe that the creator of special qualities and effects in things is Allah and that He also has the power to remove those qualities and effects at any particular instant, when He so wishes. He also has the power to exchange those qualities and effects for other qualities.

However even if the Materialists are not inclined to accept this, and in accordance with their philosophy, they find difficulty in believing it, then still, we see no way out for them to reject this miraculous happening. This is so because we have already said the natural quality of fire is to burn and whatever is cast into it will burn. But how is it that some such things and materials, which are called 'fire-proof' remain safe from burning even in the midst of burning coals and flames?

You will say that the fire still retains the capability of burning but the material or other things like cloth is treated in such a manner that the fire has no effect on it. In other words it is not that the fire lost its ability to burn.

In reply to that a religious person will reply that what you say is exactly what could have happened here. Namrud's fire still retained its quality of burning but the burning had no effect upon Nabi Ibraheem ﷺ. The only difference is that in your 'fire-proofing' it was a result of the planning by man, which every one has the Nabi Ibraheem ﷺ, it was as a result of Allah's actions. And in order to prove to people the truth of His Nabi Allah sometimes allows this to come to the fore. This is what is called a '*Moujizah*' a miracle. This is not a special art of any specific person. And if some person has the ability to prevent the effects of some things from appearing, why should the creator of men not have that power?

And if today according to the researches of scientists there are some such gases in the atmosphere, which in their presence makes bodies protected against burning, what prevents Allah, the creator of all gases from bringing forth such a gas which protected the body of Nabi Ibraheem ﷺ against the fire of Namrud so that the fire became cold and safe' for Ibraheem ﷺ."

"If even today there is faith like that of Ibraheem then fire would create of itself a Rose-Garden."

Anyway the unfortunate people did not heed Ibraheem (*Alaihis Salãm*)'s call and refused to accept the path of righteousness and '*Hidayat*' but apart from Nabi Ibraheem (*Alaihis Salãm*)'s wife, Hazrat Sara and his cousin Loot, no one else believed. They all together decided to burn him to death and cast him into the blazing fire and Allah translated their plans and saved him from the fire.

Nabi Ibraheem now decided to leave that environment and proceed to somewhere else to convey his message of faith and truth. He decided to migrate from there:

And said Ibraheem :

"I shall go towards my Lord. He will guide me."
(37:99)

Hijrat towards the Caldia

Nabi Ibraheem left his father and the people and along the western bank of the Euphrates River he went to a place called Caldia. There he settled for some time with Hazrat Sara and Nabi Loot . From there he travelled to a place called Haraan where he preached the upright religion of Islam. However all along he continued to pray to Allah begging for the forgiveness of his father, Azar, praying for him to be granted guidance. This was because Ibraheem was a very soft hearted and merciful being and in spite of the father's harshness and enmity towards him, he had promised his father that he would big Allah's pardon on his behalf. In the end Ibraheem was informed through revelation that his father would not believe and he was of those people who had made themselves worthy of the wrath of Allah.

> "Allah has sealed their hearts and upon their hearing and their seeing is a veil." (2:7)

When Ibraheem ﷺ was informed of this he openly declared himself free of his father.

Hijrat towards Palestine

Continuing with his mission Nabi Ibraheem ﷺ reached Palestine together with Hazrat Sara, Hazrat Loot ﷺ and his wife. He settled in the western part of the country, which was, then under the Canaanites. From there he went towards Scheykam (Nablus); where he stayed for a time. Even here too he did not stay very long, went back towards the west and finally landed in Egypt.

Various Masa'il

According to a *Hadith* it is said:

> "Nabi Ibraheem ﷺ never spoke an untruth except in three cases.' (*Bukhari*)

1. Ibraheem (*Alaihis Salãm*)'s sickness:

The Qur'ãn mentions the moment when a conversation took place between Nabi Ibraheem ﷺ and some members of his people regarding participation in the festival for the idols. "He said: I am sick."

Anyone with a fair mind will not be able to get the impression that here Ibraheem ﷺ was guilty of telling a lie, because what could be meant by this sentence is a "sickness of mind and temperament." Because even if a person seems outwardly healthy it does not necessary mean that he is in fact healthy. It could also be that he meant I am sick of your nonsensical worship of these idols.

2. Smashing the Idols:

At the time of the smashing and breaking of the idols, he was asked and he is reported to have said:

> "Nay, This was done by the big idol ask them if they can speak." (21:63)

Even in this too there is not a trace of an untruth. Here two people of differing views are having a debate. We know that in debates it often happens that to make one's opponent aware of his mistake and to silence him in argument, it often happens that for the sake of argument, accept one of his accepted beliefs as being correct, and then to use that fact in such a manner that the result is against his argument and in one's favour. This is what Ibraheem ﷺ did. They believed that their gods hears everything and grant their desires and that they are pleased with their priests and worshippers while taking revenge against enemies.

When he broke the idols, he left the big idol and when in the end they inquired of him, Ibraheem ﷺ used the above form of debate argument the result was that the priests and all the people were forced to admit that they were in the wrong and that the idols were powerless.

So in this instance also there was no untruth.

3. Ibraheem (*Alaihis Salãm*)'s statement regarding Hazrat Sara:

The third incident concerns a *Hadith* by Abu Hurairah (*Radhiyallãhu anhu*). When Nabi Ibraheem ﷺ passed through Egypt, he said to Hazrat Sara before entering Egypt that the King is a greatly unjust tyrant. When he sees any beautiful women, he takes her away by force, if her companion is her husband, he has him killed; but if the

companion is some other relative, he pays no attention to him. He said to her: "You are my *Deeny* sister and in this land apart form you and me there are no other Muslims.

"So tell him I am your brother."

And so it happened. That night when the King desired to truth her with the aim of evil, his hand became paralysed and he could not touch her. He then told her:

"Pray to your god to restore my hand to full health.

And I will set you free."

Hazrat Sara made *Du'a* but once again he desired to touch her with the intention of evil. But again his hand became paralysed. The same story happened for a third time and he said: "It seems you are a '*Jinn*' not a human being.

Take her away from here."And then gave a young-girl. Hazrat Hajira to take with.

When Hazrat Sara reached Ibraheem ﷺ, he asked her what happened and Hazrat Sara congratulated him and said: "All praise to Allah who saved us from such an evil-doing bad man who also sent you a bonds maiden as a gift.

This is the story as it appears in various *Hadith* books. Maulana Hifzur Rahman after discussing the story in detail and then conclude thus:

"To have a truthful tongue is a necessary guilty of all Prophets and is very essential for the sinless ness (*Ismat*) of a Prophet. And now that the Qur'ãn has mentioned the special high qualities of Nabi Ibraheem ﷺ so how is it that something which out wardly resembles 'untruth' can be attributed to him?

Allah says:

> "And mention in the Book, Ibraheem ﷺ. Indeed he was a man of truth, A Prophet."
>
> (19:41)

The term *Siddeeq* is translated above as 'a man of truth'. Actually the term *Siddeeq* used is a exaggerated form of the term Sadiq i.e., the Qur'ãn wishes to emphasise the fact that he was very truthful.

Maulana further states: "Undoubtedly the sinless ness of the Prophets is one of the important principles of the *Deen* and is of the important beliefs in the *Deen*. In fact the truth of the *Deen* and religion is squarely based upon this belief. This is so because if we accept that sometimes a Prophet may occasionally be guilty of untruths-even if such untruths are not in his favour-then the distinction is lifted out of the teachings brought by him because how will we know which part of his teachings are correct and truthful and which are coloured with some untruths. If we should accept that it will mean that *Deen* will not remain *Deen* and religion will not remain religion. For this reason the Qur'ãn has mentioned the '*Ismat*' of the Prophets as an unshakable and unchangeable principle.

The Position of Hazrat Hajira

From all reports the story becomes clear that Nabi Ibraheem ﷺ, Hazrat Sara and Nabi Loot went to Egypt. At that time the king of Egypt was someone from the semific offspring. This meant that the King was connected in family bonds to Nabi Ibraeem ﷺ. After arriving in Egypt something must have happened between Ibraheem ﷺ and the King from which the King deduced the fact that Ibraheem ﷺ and his family were chosen one's of God. Realizing this he showed

much respect to Ibraheem ﷺ and Hazrat Sara and gave them various presents. Not only that, he also gave his daughter Hazrat Hajira into the hands of Ibraheem ﷺ with the aim of strengthening the ancient family bonds between them. This was in accordance with the custom of that time that Hazrat Hajira should become a servant of the first wife, Hazrat Sara.

According to reliable Jewish reports Hazrat Hajira was the daughter of King of Egypt and not a slave-girl or bonds maiden. A reliable commentator on the Torah, B. Slomo Isaac writes on chapter 16 of the Book Genesis verse No.1

> "When he (Rageon, the King of Egypt) saw various miraculous happenings from Hazrat Sara, he said: "For my daughter to live in his house as a bonds maiden is better than being a queen in someone else's house".
>
> (*Ardul-Qur'ãn* Vol. 2, Page 41)

It is also said that the word Hazrat Hajira means one who makes *Hijrat*. As such it could be an indication that she left her home land to be joined with Nabi Ibraheem ﷺ and Hazrat Sara to serve them. For this reason she was called Hajira. She is called a bonds maiden simply because the Egyption King gave her as a servant into the service and hands of Nabi Ibraheem ﷺ and Hazrat Sara. It was not with this meaning that she would be a slave-girl.

Nabi Ibraheem (Alaihis Salãm)'s Du'as

1. In *Surah Mumtahinah* a *Du'a* of Nabi Ibraheem ﷺ is given:

> "O our Lord, make us not a *Fitnah* (trial) for the unbelievers." (Surah 60:5)

What is the aim of this and what is the meaning *Du'a* of not being made a trial for the unbelievers?

In technical terms the word '*Fitnah*' refers to a trial or a test and as such the obstacles and diffeculteis that comes over a person are called a '*Fitnah*.'

Also for this reason the Qur'ãn mentions ones family, children and position in life as being a '*Fitnah*' a trial. The Qur'ãn also clearly announces that a *Mumin* will be tested so as to ascertain who is truthful and who is untruthful.

The *Ulama* have given various solutions to answer the question of the *Du'a* of Nabi Ibraheem ﷺ. The most appropriate answer is that in these words he prays: O Allah do not leave us in the hands of the non-believers that for the sake of turning us a back from *Imãn* and for getting us to accept *Kufr*, they may cause us all kinds of persecution and hardships to lead us astray. This is the *Du'a* of an eminent messenger of Allah and a highly ranked spiritual guide who is also quite aware of his human frailties and now begs before his Lord and Master, asking that time should never come when the shine and splendour of *Kufr* should test the acceptors of *Touheed* to such an extent that they forget the distinct difference between *Kufr* and *Imãn*.

2. Nabi Ibraheem (*Alaihis Salãm*)'s *Du'a* in *Surah Shu'araa* is given as;

> "And do not disgrace me on the day men are raised up. (26.87)

With regard to this verse there is *Hadith* stating that on the day of *Qiyamat* Ibrheem will see his father in very disturbed state. He will then say; "O Lord in the world you have accepted my *Du'a*. So why today this disgrace here on this plain. I see my father in this state?"

Allah will reply:

> "O Ibraheem I have made Paradise prohibited for the unbelievers."
>
> (*Bukhari Kitaabul Tafseer*)

After dealing with this *Hadith* and other reports relevant to it, Hafiz Ibn Hajar writes: "Among the special qualities which the Qur'ãn mentions about Ibraheem ﷺ is this that he was "very soft-hearted and most forbearing." Thus when on the day of *Qiyamat* when he will see his father in a very unfortunate state, his soft-heartedness will be hearvily stirred and in sprite of being among the foremost messengers of Allah, knowing the true state of affairs his noble character will be such that he would want to beg forgiveness on Azar's behalf. He will then take refuge in that *Du'a* which had been blessed with acceptance in this world and he will look upon his father's disgrace and humiliation as his own humiliation and he will then mention the promise which was made to him. But Allah will reply: "I have prohibited Paradise to the Unbelievers." It is as if Allah will remind him that because of your natural soft-heartedness, you should not forget this fact. This is not the world of deeds, this is the day of reward and retribution. This day the scales of justice are set up and for which an everlasting and unchangeable law has been fixed that for an Unbeliever and a polytheist there is no place in Paradise. And the disgrace of a *Mushrik* cannot be the humiliation of a believers no matter how strong the family bonds between them.

In any case Nabi Ibraheem (*Alaihis Salãm*)'s question was not that he feared that a promise made to him was being broken. It was as a result of a natural inner demand, which even if the results were not able to be changed, yet it points towards the good qualities and the noble character of the questioner.

Then Allah said to him: "If you want to observe the process, then take a few birds and cut them into pieces and place those pieces on yonder mountain then take up position away from them and call them to you.

Nabi Ibraheem ﷺ did as Allah commanded. When he called them, the pieces of the birds came together into their separate bodies and came alive flying towards Ibraheem ﷺ.

(2:260)

Nabi Ibraheem (Alaihis Salãm)'s Children

At the time of the birth of Ibraheem (*Alaihis Salãm*)'s eldest son Ismail ﷺ, his age was 86 years and when his other son Ishaaq ﷺ was born his age was once hundred years. Apart from Hazrat Sara and Hazrat Hajira, Ibraheem ﷺ married a third wife from whom he had six sons. Their offspring were named after their mother and they were called *Bani Qatoora*. It is said that Nabi Ibraheem (*Alaihis Salãm*)'s age was 175. He died and was buried in Hebron near Jerusalem.

Hazrat Ismail 

Birth

When Ibraheem ﷺ returned out of Egypt he settled in Palestine, which was also called Can'aan. Up to that time he had been deprived of children. He continued to pray to Allah for offspring and Allah accepted his *Du'a*. It is so happened that his younger wife, Hazrat Hajira became pregnant. It is said that Hazrat Sara became jealous and envious of her and as result Hazrat Hajira was forced to leave from her company and presence.

According to the Torah she happened to pass by such a place where there was a well. There she spoke to some Angels and the well was called "the well of him who comes, looking alive." A short while later Hajira gave birth to a son and in response to the good news from the Angels his name was given 'Ismail.'

The Valley of No Vegetation

The story of the period after the birth of Ismail is mentioned in *Hadith* reported by Hazrat Abdullah bin Abbaas ؓ:

> "Sayeduna Ibraheem ﷺ, Hazrat Hajira and their infant son Ismail went forth and there

> where the *Kabah* is situated today under a big tree, Ibraheem left them there where the *Zam Zam* well is today. The whole area was empty and uninhabited at the time with not a drop of water in sight. Hence Ibraheem left with them one water bag and a packet of dates. He then turned away from them and left. Hazrat Hajira followed him, and exclaimed: "O Ibrheem are you leaving us here where there is no other person, no companion, no friend?"

She kept on asking this but Ibraheem kept walking away in silence. Then she asked: "Did your Lord command you to do this?"

Then he answered: "Yes. This is as Allah commands."

Hearing this Hazrat Hajira said: "If this is Allah's command then surely, He will not allow us to be destroyed."

Then she returned.

Ibraheem kept on walking away and when he came to such a place where his family had disappeared from his sight, he turned in the direction of where the *Kabah* now stands and prayed:

> "O our Lord I have made some of my offspring to settle in a valley without any cultivation, By they sacred House. In order O Lord that they may establish regular prayer. So fill the hearts of some among men with love towards them. And feed them with fruits so that they may give thanks." (14:37)

For a couple of days Hazrat Hajira continued to drink the water from the water bag and ate some of the dates while

giving Ismail to drink of her milk. At last there was no more water and no dates. She became greatly worried and as she became hungry and thirsty she also had no milk to feed the child. The situation changed and the child too became besides itself with hunger. She left the child in one place and she then climbed onto a nearby hill-safa, hoping to see some person from there. But she could see no one. Then with the love for the child in her she came down to the valley and walked along till she came to the next hill-Marwa and again climbed onto it. When from there too she saw no one she came down and walked in the direction of the child. She did this walking around seven times. Reaching this point Rasulullah ﷺ said: "This is the *Saee* between Safa and Marwa." Which people perform during *Hajj*.

The last time she was on Marwa when a noise reached her. The voice started her as she was tried to see who it was calling her. She answered: "If you are able to help then come out and appear. I have heard you."

When she again looked she saw the Angel Jibrael عليه السلام. The Angel struck its foot on the ground where the *Zamzam* well is today and water started to ooze out of the ground. When she saw this she built a sand wall around the water, but the water continued to flow out of the ground.

Rasulullah ﷺ said: "May Allah have mercy on the mother of Ismail. If she did not stop the water and if she did not build a wall around it, it would have been a very strong fountain today.

Hazrat Hajira drank of the water and gave Isamil milk to drink.The Angel told her:

> "Do not be afraid or sad. Allah will not allow
> you or this child to be destroyed or to perish.

> This place is the House of Allah and the building of it by this child and his father has been predestined by Allah. Allah will not destroy this family?"

After a while one of the tribes of Bani Jurhum came to settle near them. They saw some birds flying around and deduced that there was water in the vicinity. Therefore they also asked for permission to settle in that Valley. To this Hazrat Hajira replied:

> "You have permission to settle here but on this condition that you will not be a part-owner of the water."

Bani Jurhum accepted this condition gladly and settled. Hazrat Hajira also desired that for mutual company these people should settle there. Hence they sent someone to call the rest of their tribe to come that way and built their houses. Ismail also lived among them and played with their children and so learned their language. When he grew up he married one of their daughters. Soon after Hazrat Hajira passed away.

(This report is found in Sahih Bukhari in two places: *Kitabul Ru'yaa* and in *Kitabul Ambiya* and according to both reports Ismail ﷺ reached: "This Valley without any vegetation" as an infant child. It also states that Ibraheem ﷺ left his wife Hazrat Hajira and his child in this hostile desert, but he, being a Messenger of Allah, how coulc he forget his family there?

How could he be unmindful or negligent of their welfare? Again he used to come to this dry desert to visit them as seems clear from the last part of this *Hadith*.

The Ways of a Pious Wife

In that same *Hadith* there is a piece which describes Ismail's wives. Once Hazrat Ibraheem came on a visit to the house of Ismail, while Ismail was gone out somewhere else. He met the wife and she told him that Ismail was gone away in search of sustenance. When he next asked her what the situation was at home, she replied. When he next asked her what the situation was at home, she replied: "We are in great affliction and troubled.We are greatly in pain, difficulty and hardship."

Ibraheem then gave her a message to give to Ismail that he must change the thresh-hold of his door. When Ismail returned he found some '*Noor*' of prophethood in the house and inquired as to who had been there. Then the wife told him the story of the one who had arrived there and gave him the message. Upon this Ismail said that was his father who had come to visit and he informed her that the message was for him to divorce her as his wife. Thereafter Ismail married another wife and once again Ibraheem came there on a visit. Once again Ismail was not at home and again Ibraheem asked about what the situation was at home. This wife replied: "Allah be praised, we are well and our situation is good."

He asked: "What do you have to eat?"

She replied: "Meat."

He asked: "And what do you drink?"

She said: " Water."

Thereupon Ibraheem prayed: "May Allah bless you in your meat and water." As he left he told her: "Tell Ismail to keep his thresh-hold intact."

When Ismail ﵇ returned his wife told him the whole story and on hearing it he said: "That was my father, Ibraheem ﵇ and his message meant that I should retain you as my partner in life."

Circumcision

According to the Torah, when Ibraheem ﵇ had reached the age of ninety-nine years and Isamil ﵇ was thirteen years old Allah ordered him to perform circumcision. Before proceeding with the deed, Ibraheem ﵇ first performed his own circumcision and then circumcisied Isamil ﵇ as well as all the males of his family and servants of the household.

This custom of circumcision is one of the salient features of the *Ibraheemi Religion* and has been eversince called the *Ibraheemi Sunnat.*

The Great Offering

Those who are near to the presence of Allah are made to walk through difficult paths. This is as was the case with Hazrat Ibraheem ﵇. The first stage of this path of obstacles was when he was cast into burning flames. At that time the amount of patience he showed and the resigned nature in which he accepted the verdict of Allah, was note worthy of his high stature. Secondly when he was ordered to leave his wife Hazrat Hajira and infant son in the uninhabited dry desert of Faraan. This too was no mean task. It now happened that for three nights successively Hazrat Ibraheem ﵇ saw in a dream that Allah orders him to sacrifice his only son, Ismail ﵇ in the path of Allah.

The dreams of the Prophets are 'true visions' and considered as being revelation from Allah. For this reason Ibraheem ﵇ was immediately prepared to carry out this

command. But because the command did not only concern his own self but also included another person-his only son, he therefore told his son of the command and the dream. The son, being a son of such an eminent Prophet and reformer, immediately accepted the command and he answered:

> "O father, if that is Allah's wish, then if Allah wills, you will find me patient."

Thereafter both father and son proceeded towards where they were to execute the sacrifice. They walked towards the wilderness. There the father, having acquired the permission of the son, bound his hands and feet just like is done with a sacrificial animal. He sharpened his knife and then turned Ismail with his forehead to the ground and began to slaughter him. Immediately Allah's revelation came to Ibraheem ﷺ:

> "O Ibraheem, you have already fulfilled the vision."
>
> ... This was indeed a test. Leave your son and offer instead this sheep by your side ... thus indeed do we reward those who do right."

When Ibraheem ﷺ looked behind him he saw a ram sheep standing near the bush. He thanked Allah and sacrificed the ram.

This is that sacrifice and slaughter which Allah so approved of that He made it one of the main features of the Ibraheemi religion. And even today on the 10th of *Zil-Hijja* is being celebrated and commemorated all over the Islamic world.

However from this story it is not clear who of his children were supposed to be sacrificed, Ismail ﷺ or Ishaaq ﷺ. Although the Qur'ān does not mention the name of the

son, but according to the way the story is told, it seems without any doubt that Ismail is the one, studying the text of the Qur'ãn. In fact that is the truth and reality. The story is told in *Surah Sauffaat* verses 100 to 113.

Erection of the Kabah

Although Hazrat Ibraheem resided in Palestine, he regularly came to visit Hajira and Ismail from time to time. Then at one time Allah commanded him to built the 'House of Allah.' He informed his son Ismail of the command and they started building the *Kabah*.

There is one report according to which the foundation of the *Kabah* was first erected by Hazrat Adam and the Angel showed Ibraheem where the original House stood, and where after thousands of years there was now not a sign left of the original House of Allah.

Through Revelation, he was shown where the *Kabah* should be built and with the help of Ismail they started digging the foundation and upon the original foundation the *Kabah* was erected. In the Qur'ãn there is no mention of the previous erection.

It is a truth that before that time all over the world and in every corner of the world there were temples for the worship of idols and heavenly bodies, but this was the first House erected, solely for the worship of the One True God.

Couplet:

> "Indeed the first House erected for the *Zikr* of Allah.
>
> Is the one in Makkah, blessed and a fountain of guidance."

This house has the honour that an eminent Prophet like Ibraheem was its builder and another Prophet of Allah, the *Zabeeh*, Ismail was his assistant.

They built it and as the work carried on and Ibraheem (*Alaihis Salãm*)'s hand could not longer reach a certain spot, Ismail provided him with a stone on which he stood. This stone used to move up and down as was required and today it is that relic which is known as the *Maqaam-e-Ibraheem*.

When the building was almost finished, and they reached that point where the *Hajar-e-Aswad* the Black Stone had to be fixed in place, Jibreel guided them further. He brought forth from the mountain the *Hajar-e-Aswad*, which originally is said to come from Paradise. This stone was fixed in the one corner.

When the *Kabah's* erection was complete, Allah said to Ibrhaeem :

> "This house is a *Qiblah* for people of the *Ibraheemi Religion*. It is the direction for people to perform *Sujood* to Me. Thus it has been declared as the centre for the people of *Tauheed*."

There upon Ibraheem and Ismail prayed:

> "O our Lord, make me one who establishes regular prayers and also (raise such) among my offspring. O our Lord accept my prayer.
>
> "O our Lord make us and our offspring establish regular prayer and guide them towards *Zakah* and make them steadfast and grant them blessings in there fruits and sustenance and grant to all the inhabitants of

> this world the guidance to look upon them with favour that they may come from far-off places to perform their *Hajj* rites and that they may gather at this center to acquire fruits for their ever lasting happiness.

The Holy Qur'ãn has given Ibraheem ﷺ and Ismailes prayers at the time of their having completed the erection of the House of Allah, in which they prayed for the establishment of regular prayers, the performance of the *Hajj* (pilgrimage) and that the *Baitullah* may become the *Markaz* for *Tauheed*. These prayers has been mentioned in various styles in *Surah Al-e-Imraan* 3:97; *Surah Al-Baqarah* 2: 125-129; *Surah Hajj* 22:23, 33, 36 and 37.

Hazrat Ismail's Children

According to the Torah, Hazrat Ismail ﷺ had twelve sons who were called the twelve chiefs who in future were to become the fathers of tribes.

He also had one daughter called Bishaamah or Muhallah. Her sons were called the *Ashaabul Hijr*, the offspring of Na'bit. And the offspring of the son Kaydaar's offspring were called the *Ashaabir-Rus*.

Mention of Ismail (Alaihis Salãm)'s in the Qur'ãn

Hazrat Ismail ﷺ is mentioned in the Qur'ãn on several occasions. In *Surah Maryam* he is mentioned by name and some beautiful qualities of his are mentioned:

> "And mention in the Book the story of Ismail. He was strictly true to what he promised. And he was a Messenger and a Prophet." (19:54)

> He used to enjoin on his people prayer and charity and he was most acceptable in the sight of his Lord. (19:54—55)

Death of Hazrat Ismail عليه السلام

When Hazrat Ismail عليه السلام was one hundred and thirty six years old he passed away. According to the Torah he died in Palestine and was buried there.

According to Arab Historians he and his mother Hajira passed away near the *Kabah* and were buried in the Haram near the Baitullah.

Hazrat Ishaq عليه السلام

His Birth

When Hazrat Ibraheem عليه السلام was about a hundred years old. Allah gave him the good news that from the womb of Sara a child was going to be born. His name should be given Ishaaq. The Qur'ãn states:

> "And we gave her glad tidings of Ishaaq and after him Yaqoob.

She said: "Alas for me! shall I bear a child seeing I am an old woman and my husband here is an old man. That would indeed be a wonderful thing."

The Angels said: "Dost thou wonder at Allah's decree? The grace of Allah and His blessing on you O ye people of the House.

> For He is indeed worthy of praise, Full of Glory." (11:71—73)

The Qur'ãn also states:

> Ibraheem عليه السلام said: "Do you give me glad tidings that old age had seized me of what then in your good news?

> They said: "We give thee glad tidings in truth. Be not in despair."
>
> He said: "And who despairs of the Mercy of his Lord but such as go astray?"

Circumcision

When Ishaaq عليه السلام was eight days old, Ibraheem عليه السلام performed his circumcision.

Ishaaq (Alaihis Salãm)'s Marriage

According to the Torah Ishaaq عليه السلام was married to a daughter of Nabi Ibraheem (*Alaihis Salãm*)'s nephew and from this marriage two sons, Esau and Yaqoob عليه السلام were born.

Esau got married to Nabi Ismail (*Alaihis Salãm*)'s daughter Bishaamat or Muhallaat, while Hazrat Yaqoob عليه السلام was married in the family of his maternal uncle.

Ishaaq (Alaihis Salãm)'s Mention in the Qur'ãn

In the Qur'ãn Hazrat Ishaaq is mentioned in *Surah Ambiyaa*, *Surah Maryam*, *Surah Hood* and *Surah Saffaat.*

Hazrat Loot عليه السلام

Loot and Ibraheem (Alaihimus Salãm)

Hazrat Loot عليه السلام is a cousin of Nabi Ibraheem عليه السلام and during his childhood he used to live under the care of Sayeduna Ibraheem عليه السلام and grew up in the house of Nabi Ibraheem عليه السلام.

After Returning from Egypt

During Nabi Ibraheem (*Alaihis Salãm*)'s *Hijrats* Hazrat Loot عليه السلام and his wife always remained with him and while Ibraheem عليه السلام was in Egypt they also were with him.

After Egypt Nabi Ibraheem عليه السلام settled in Palestine while Nabi Loot chose to reside on the eastern side of the Jordan. There were two well known tribes in that area, viz Sodom and Ghamoorah.

The People of Loot

When Nabi Loot عليه السلام settled on the Eastern side of the Jordan, he found that the people of the area were involved with great evils and sinful practices. No other wordly evil was there which were not found among them. Apart from the other sins they were also involved with a very bad practice that to satisfy their sexual lusts, the men instead of resorting to females chose to do so with other males. Up to that time in

the world, this was not practised anywhere. This was a very unfortunate group of people who invented this evil act. And what is worse than that, they did not look upon it as a sin and they proudly proclaimed their being involved with it.

The Qur'ãn states:

> "And we sent Loot. He said to his people: "Do ye commit lewdness such as no people mention over committed before you.
>
> For you practise your lasts on men in preference to women. You are indeed a people transgressing beyond bounds." (7:80—87)

Hazrat Loot ﷺ Conveying the Message

Nabi Loot ﷺ preached to them about their shame less acts and iniquities and tried to get them towards a life of noble deeds and clean-living. In soft terms he tried to get them to heed his call explaining to them the results of previous nations as signs of warning but his call had no effect upon them. They replied by saying:

> " And his people gave no answer but this; they said:
>
> Drive them out of your city. These are indeed men who want to be clean and pure." (7:82)

This was a scornful and jeering manner of sarcastically playing the fool with the family of Nabi Loot ﷺ. It was as if they said: If we are so shameless and evil and they are so clean and pure, there is no place for them in our city. Take them out. Expel them.

However Nabi Loot ﷺ continued to advise them against those evils.

> "Do you indeed approach men and cut off the highway.?
>
> And practise wickedness even in your councils?
>
> But his people gave no answer but this; they said:
>
> "Bring us the wrath of God of you tell the truth."
>
> (29:29)

Hazrat Ibraheem ﷺ *and the Angels*

While this was happening to Nabi Loot, Nabi Ibraheem ﷺ had an experience. He was walking in the desert and saw three men a head of him. Ibraheem ﷺ was a humble and hospitable man. He was always prepared to entertain guests and seeing these three strangers, he was quite happy. He invited them to his house where he slaughtered a calf and roasted the meat and placed it before the guests. They refused to eat and then Nabi Ibraheem ﷺ thought they were enemies who according to custom would refuse to partake of food. He was frightened as to what this was. When the guests saw his confusion and worry, they laughed and said:

> "Do not fear. We are Angels of Allah and have been sent to destroy the people of Loot. We are going to Sodom."

When Nabi Ibraheem ﷺ was convinced that they were not an enemy but were in fact Allah's Angels, his soft-heartedness, sympathetic feelings and his love and Mercy was stirred and on behalf of the people of Nabi Loot ﷺ he began to dispute with the Angels: "How can you go and destroy the people among which there is such a chosen Messenger of Allah like Nabi Loot ﷺ.

The Angels replied:

> "We are well aware of who are there but Allah has decreed that the people of Loot because of their evil deeds, their obstinate rebellion, and their shamelessness and there insistance on evil, will be brought to destruction while Loot ﷺ and his family will be saved except the wife of Loot ﷺ who, having assisted in their evil deeds and their wrong beliefs, will be destroyed with them."

In any case Nabi Loot (*Alaihis Salãm*)'s efforts of conveying the truth to his people had no effect upon them at all, and they remained involved with their evil deeds.

He said to them:

> "Do you not consider the fact that for my efforts of conveying the message to you by night and by day, and for my continuous worries on your behalf, I do not ask of you any payment or reward or any present?
>
> All I seck of my efforts is your salvation and your worldly and spiritual success. And yet you pay no attention at all."

Even this too had no effect upon them. They continued to threaten him with expalsion and stoning to death. When at last there was no positive response from them, the same happened to them as is stipulated in the Divine law of Retribution which in their case also meant destruction.

The Angels after leaving Nabi Ibraheem (*Alaihis Salãm*)'s presence proceeded towards Sodom where they became the guests of Nabi Loot ﷺ. They were all in the

forms of handsome, young men. When Nabi Loot ﷺ saw them he was worried as to what his people would do to these young men. At that time he had not get been informed that they were Angels.

Hazrat Loot ﷺ was still struggling with this fear when the people came to know of the visitors and came to his house, demanding that he should hand the guests over to them. He tried his best to dissuade them from this demand and asked them: "Is there not one rational reasonable man amongst you? Why are you so insistant upon this curse of seeking satisfaction for your last in the company of men, leaving aside the women folk.

Alas, if only I had 'a strong pillar' on which to rely?"

When the Angels saw his greatly troubled state, they said to him:

> "Do not look at our outer forms and be so worried. We are Angels from Allah, bringing His punishment. Allah's decree in their regard is fixed and will not be warded off from them. You and your family will be saved and protected from the punishment, except your wife who was an assistant to them. She will not be with you."

At last the punishment of Allah came. At a sign from the Angels, Nabi Loot ﷺ and his family left the town. His wife refused to be with them, and along the way out, she turned back and left them for return to Sodom.

Then in the later part of the night, a frightening cry turned the people upside down. Then an earthquake took place in which the upper coarse of the earth was taken up and turned down upon them. From above stones rained down

upon them and destroyed the town so that not a sign of them was left. And so happened to them what happened to other rebellious disobedient nations.

Ibraheem ﷺ the Reformer

From the various incidents related here apart from the fact that there are lessons and warnings for men, another important point that comes to the fore is the fact that the personality of Hazrat Ibraheem ﷺ in the office of Prophet hood and messenger ship holds a position of superiority and seniority.

It is the true that every messenger of Allah is a caller towards the oneness of Allah and is an enemy of '*shirk*' and in the lives of all the messengers, these two points are common factors and spiritual invitations is firmly based upon these two points. However Nabi Ibraheem ﷺ is the first person in this world who had to pass through very heavy trials and tests and had to combat great calamities and through all these trials he emerged successfully.

Just think for a moment. At very old age after numerous *Du'a*s and numerous hopes and desires a child is born. The child is still in its infant stage when an order from Allah comes: "O Ibraheem ﷺ, take the mother and child, cross the desert till you reach a valley in which there is no vegetation and leave them there."

Thereafter what happens? Did Ibraheem ﷺ hesitate even for a moment before carrying out this order? Did he put forth any excuse? No, nothing, he immediately left to leave the mother and child there where the *Kabah* now stands. After that when the child reaches the age of reason and discernment when he has become the refreshment of the eyes to his parents, again comes and order to sacrifice

the child in the Name of Allah to show his obedience to Allah.

At such a time the most obedient one and the most righteous one will find himself some what in a dilemma with at least a bit of hesitation. And even though the revelation came in the form of a dream shown to him, he never tried to interpret it in a different way, but without any hesitation he took his beloved son the next day with the aim of carrying out the order, showing his faithfulness.

The third test was when Namrud, his father and the people passed a unanimous judgement against him that he should desist from preaching his message or he would be cast into a blazing fire. In the face of the unanimity among them one would expect Ibraheem (*Alaihis Salãm*)'s feel to hesitate, but this never happened. He was as steadfast as a mountain as he continued to preach the truth and convey the message just as before. The enemies then did what they threatened to do and cast him into a blazing fire. In Ibraheem ﷺ there was no difference in his dignified resolve and determination. However Allah frustrated all their plans and efforts as the flames of the fire were made 'cool and safe' for Ibraheem ﷺ. Thereafter under the protection of Allah he continued to enlighten the servants of Allah and became even more diligent in conveying the message.

Apart from Ibraheem (*Alaihis Salãm*)'s various tests and his steadfastness during those tests there is another speciality in the make up of Nabi Ibraheem ﷺ and that is in the contrasting lives of *Shirk* and *Tauheed*, he produced such a special distinction which could only come forth from a messenger of Allah like himself. In his condemnation of idol worship and worship of the heavenly bodies, he clearly announced:

> "For me, I havé set my face firmly and truly towards Him who created the heavens and the earth and never shall I give partners unto God."
> (6:79)

The meaning of this exclamation is that there are two views regarding Allah one the right view and secondly the wrong one.

The wrong view is this that it is believed that to acquire Allah's pleasure and to keep Him happy and to worship him properly, one will have to also worship the idols, and heavenly bodies for when these are pleased with us, they will make Allah be happy and pleased with us.

This belief is '*Shirk*' or '*Saubi'at*'. It means that all the worship which is for Allah alone and should be so, is shared also with others. That is the reality of '*Shirk*.'

In contrast to that is the correct path according to which one should have this belief that the only way of acquiring Allah's pleasure and satisfaction is that one should worship Him consider Him as the solver of our problems and the granter of our needs. He is the one in whose hands lit benefit and our harm or losses, our health and our illnesses, our poverty and our wealth, our sustenance in abundance or in inadequate amount, our life and our death. In other words One should accept that in all our affairs. He is the doer with complete freedom to do as He sees fit. Then also to acquire knowledge of His pleasure and displeasure one should act according to the teachings of the messengers whom He sent to this world. What this means is that to acquire Allah's pleasure and to attain nearness to Him there is no need to make the idols our intermediaries or intercessors, but just to worship Him alone. This is the belief of Islam and this is the upright religion.

This is the distinction Nabi Ibraheem ﷺ made between *Shirk* and *Imãn.*

It became the foundation stone on which the following Prophets built until the final Prophet Muhammad ﷺ called his religion the "upright religion" and also named his follows 'Muslims.'

> "And follow the way of Ibraheem ﷺ the true in faith." (4:125)
>
> "Ibraheem ﷺ has named you Muslim and so also in this Qur'ãn." (22:78)

This is the reason why there is this speciality in *Surah Ibraheem* that in it the advent of the Prophets (*Alaihimus Salãm*) and their personalities have been described as well as their general results and in it has been given the difference between those who obeyed and accepted their calls and invitation to guidance and those who rejected their invitations.

So bearing all that in mind, we say that among the Prophets and Messengers Nabi Ibraheem ﷺ has a position which we may call the Renovator of the Prophets.

Lessons from the Various Incidents

1. When a person has made a firm belief to enter his heart with certainty and that belief has become joined to his soul and been made a firm image within him, thoughts about that belief becomes so strong and steadfast that no happening on earth and no calamity however great will be able to remove it from his breast. He will enter a fire with pleasure or dive into a deep ocean without hesitation and fearlessly step onto the steps leading to crucifixion. The example of Nabi Ibraheem ﷺ is a living example thereof.

2. In support of the truth such arguments should be cited which will enter the hearts and minds of enemies and followers of falsehood so that they may not admit by tongue, but their hearts will be forced to declare, the truth reluctantly and at times the tongue will unintentionally declare. In the following verse this is what is meant: "And dispute with them in the best manner."

3. It is the way of the Prophets (*Alaihimus Salãm*) and Messengers that they do not utilize the arguments of logic in their disputes with people. Their arguments concern observations and things that are perceivable and they refer to simple rational things. Nabi Ibraheem (*Alaihis Salãm*)'s debate with his people about idol worship and worship of the stars and heavenly bodies is a clear example thereof.

4. In the effort to prove a truth, if one makes use of for the sake of argument accepting his wrong belief, this does not mean one's acceptance of wrong beliefs. In debating it is a strategy used for the purpose of making the opponent see his mistake and admitting to it.

   Nabi Ibraheem ﷺ used this method in his debate with the general public the idol worshippers so that they had to admit that the idols could not hear and were unable to answer.

5. Even if one's father is an idol-worshipper and not prepared under any circumstances to discard idol worship then one should stay clear of his life of '*Shirk*', but in worldly and spiritual affairs it will still be necessary to deal with him in a soft manner with kind advice. It will still not be permissible to act harshly towards him. The manner in which Nabi

Ibraheem treated his father and the way in which Rasulullah treated Abu Taalib are living examples thereof.

6. When a believer has faith in his heart and in his tongue, but he does not have a physical observation of that faith which grants complete certainty and then begs for such a demonstration, this is not doubt or disbelief but is in fact actual faith as was mentioned by Nabi Ibraheem , ("I do believe, but it is to set my heart at ease)."

7. If a person shows hospitality and generosity to guests without wishing to show off his hospitality to be known for it, this is a sign of kind-heartedness and of his noble character which is also known as generosity.

In some books a story is being told of Ibraheem (*Alaihis Salãm*)'s generosity. Once he was standing in the desert awaiting the arrival of a guest. This was so because he was in the habit of never eating alone. From ahead of him he saw an old man coming along leaning on a walking stick with his back bent forward. As he approached Nabi Ibraheem went forward to welcome him with pleasure and brought him home. They ate and when they had finished eating, Ibraheem said: "Now let us express thanks to that Being who granted us all these favours:

> "The old man, becoming angry replied: "I do not know who that one Being of yours is, I express thanks to my god, who is kept in my home-my idol."

This reply went down very badly with Ibraheem and in response he quickly got rid of the old man and sent him forth.

However, not long after that Ibraheem ﷺ felt sorrow in his heart for having got rid of the old man so quickly. He thought within himself. "The God whom I wanted him to express thanks to-His dealing with this man is such that during this old man's long life, He has continuously blessed him with His bounties and in spite of being displeased with his idol worship, He has not for one day closed down on him the doors of His sustenance. What right did you have, O Ibraheem ﷺ, that this man has refused to accept your suggestion and you become angry and expel him from your house so quickly?"

Whether this incident is acceptable or not, it still serves to indicate the nobility of character which is an excellent example for others and his thoughts afterwards is in itself a good example.

8. When Allah chooses anyone for the purpose of spreading the truth, he enlightens their heart so much with His Noor that in their sight nothing can replace the love for truth and nothing else matters. The result is that from the beginning the preparedness and preparation is placed in them with the result that since their age of childhood they appear eminent and distinguished above their contemporaries. They willingly under go trials and tests in the path of truth and in patience and for bearance they set a fine example. The story of Hazrat Ismail ﷺ is a good witness of this and holds many lessons for us.

9. Nabi Loot ﷺ, although he was a nephew of Hazrat Ibraheem ﷺ and a follower, was also endowed with prophethood and had been made Allah's ambassador Hence in Sodom and Gamoro he was made to suffer great hardships but in spite of that he remained patient

and steadfast and instead of calling upon the help of his uncle and family, retied only on Allah. He persevered in his efforts with complete resignation. Through that he reached the rank of the 'nearest ones to Allah' among the Prophets (*Alaihimus Salãm*).

Hazrat Yaqoob عليه السلام

Name and Nasab

Sayeduna Yaqoob عليه السلام was the second son of Nabi Ishaaq عليه السلام and is the grandson of Nabi Ibraheem عليه السلام. In the Hebrew Language Hazrat Yaqoob عليه السلام; name is given as 'Israa'eel This word is made up of 'Israa' which means slave or bondsman and 'Eel' which means Allah. In Arabic this world be Abdullah-'bondsman of Allah' For this reason the children of Ibraheem عليه السلام through his son Ishaaq عليه السلام who are the offspring of Nabi Ya'qoob عليه السلام are called 'Bani Israa'eel.'

Mention of Ya'qoob عليه السلام in the Qur'ãn

In the Qur'ãn the name of Ya'qoob عليه السلام is mentioned ten times in *Surah Yusuf* in various places he is mentioned either through pronouns referring to him or through description of him. In other *Surahs* he is mentioned by description. The Qur'ãn draws attention to his being a prominent and eminent Nabi with great 'sabr' and stead fastness. He was a chosen Prophet of Allah sent to the people of Can'aan He was involved with his prophetic Duties for Many years.

He had twelve sons but their story will appear under the history of Nabi Yusuf عليه السلام which in coming right now.

Hazrat Yusuf عليه السلام

Nasab

Hazrat Yusuf عليه السلام was the son of Nabi Ya'qoob عليه السلام and is the great grandson of Nabi Ibraheem عليه السلام. He has this honour that he was a Nabi, his father was a Nabi, his grandfather, Ishaaq was a Nabi and his great grand father was the father of the *Ambiyaa*.

In the Qur'ãn he is mentioned by name 26 times and another speciality of his is that a special *Surah* in the Qur'ãn is named after him. This *Surah*, *Surah Yusuf* is a collection of many lessons and for this reason the story of Nabi Yusuf عليه السلام has been called *Ahsanul-Qasas* 'the best of stories.'

Yusuf's Dream and His Brothers

Right from his childhood days Yusuf (*Alaihis Salãm*)'s mental and natural qualities were superior to those of his other brothers. In fact Nabi Ya'qoob عليه السلام having seen the *Noor* shining on his fore-head recognised the *Noor* of Prophethood and had been informed through Divine Revelation of his coming prophethood. For this reason among all his children he had the greatest love and affection for Yusuf عليه السلام. This love and affection for Yusuf عليه السلام caused his other brothers great anguish and they were all the time

busy thinking of ways to either remove this love from the heart of Ya'qoob ﷺ or to remove Yusuf ﷺ out of the way to be rid of him.

While they were involved in these thoughts of jealousy, it so happened that Yusuf ﷺ saw a dream wherein eleven stars and the sun and the moon were performing *Sujood* in front of him.

When the father heard of this dream he strongly advised his son not to relate the dream to anyone because it is possible that if the brother came to know of it they may react in a bad way; as *Shaitan* is at all times trying to cause mischief. This dream's interpretation was clear but the brothers had been influenced by their Jealousy to plan against Yusuf ﷺ:

> "One of them said: slay not Yusuf but if ye must do something, throw him down to the bottom of a well. He will be picked up by some caravan of travellers." (12:10)

After this advice they all gathered and went to Yaqoob ﷺ and said:

> "O our father, why do you not trust us with Yusuf?
>
> Seeing we are indeed his sincere well-wishers?" (12:12)

Nabi Ya'qoob ﷺ immediately understood that there was false hood and deceit in their hearts. He said: "It saddens me that you should take him away I fear lest the wolf should devour him while you attend no to him." (12:13)

Hearing this the brothers said: "If the wolf were to devour him while we are (so strong) a party, then should we indeed first have perished ourselves." (and would have lost everything). (12:14)

The Well of Canaan

The brothers of Yusuf ﷺ took him with the aim of taking him for an outing then according to the advice given among them they put him down a drywell without water. On the way back they took his shirt and covered it in blood from an animal, came to their father, crying and said:

> "O father, He went racing with one another and left Yusuf with our things; And the wolf devoured him.
>
> But you will never believe us, even though we tell the truth." (12:17)

Nabi Yaqoob ﷺ looked at the shirt and saw it covered in blood, but it was not torn anywhere. He immediately understood what happened, but instead of scolding them or being sarcastic, he chose the way of the Messengers and with intuition.

He said:

> "Nay, but your minds have made up a tale (that may pass) with you: For me patience is most fitting.
>
> Against that which you assert, It is Allah (alone) whose help can be sought." (12:18)

Yusuf ﷺ into Slavery

While this conversation was taking place a caravan from the Ismailis of Hijaz was en route to Egypt from Syria. When they saw the well, they decided to look for water in it and let down a bucket for water. When they saw Yusuf ﷺ they shouted with glee:

"Ah, Good news, here is a fine young man."

And so the merchants from the Ismaili caravan made him their slave and took him with their goods to Egypt. In the market of Egypt they put him up for sale. Just at that time a man from the Royal family passed that way. He was potiphar, an officer of the king's forces. He bought Yusuf and brought him home to his wife and said:

> "Make his stay among us honourable. Maybe he will bring us much good, or we shall adopt him as a son.
>
> This Potiphar kept Yusuf ﷺ in his house with honour like a son and he put all the affairs and responsibilities in his hands.
>
> "Thus did we establish Yusuf ﷺ in the land that we might teach him the interpretation of stories and events.
>
> And Allah has power and control over His affairs but most among mankind know it not." (12:21)

Yusuf ﷺ and the Wife of Potiphar

After being cast into the well and after being sold into slavery a third treat was now to come over Yusuf ﷺ. It was his time of youth and in him there was no aspect which was not endowed with beauty. The wife of Potiphar was unable to keep herself aloof from him and lost her heart to him. She fell in love with him, but he who was predestined for Prophet hood, how could he succumb to her evil intentions. In the Qur'ãn story which unfolded is told in these terms:

> "And she in whose house he was sought to seduce him from his self.

> She fastened the doors and said: "Now come thou (dear one).
>
> He said: "God forbid. I seek God's refuge."
>
> (12:23)

Yusuf ﷺ ran away to the door and she followed him and tore his shirt from the back and some how the door opened with the master and his cousin standing there. She quickly spoke:

> "What is the fitting punishment for one who formed an evil design against your wife, but prison or a grievous chastisement?"
>
> He said: "It was she that sought to seduce me from my self."

One man from wife's family gave the verdict: "If his shirt is torn from the front, then she is truthful in what she says and if his shirt is torn from the back, then he is the truthful one, and she is the liar."

When they looked, they found the shirt torn from the back. He said to her:

> "Undoubtedly O woman, this is your deceit and plan. Yusuf ﷺ you are excused. O woman seek pardon for your fault, you are the faulty one."
>
> (12:25—29)

The Master, in order to avoid any scandal finished the matter of there and then but somehow the story did not remain a secret. The Qur'ān states:

> "When the news spread, some of the women in the town started saying: "The wife of Aziz has tried to seduce her bands-man She has

> fallen in love with him. In our mind she has made a great in discression."

When the Aziz's wife heard this she invited them to her place and according to their customs, spread cushions on the floor for them to sit upon and placed in front of each one of them a knife. Then she told Yusuf ﷺ: "Go into among them."

When those ladies saw him, they all were so impressed by his beauty that they took the knives and cut their hands. Unwittingly they exclaimed:

> "This is no human being. This must be a high ranking angel." (12:30—33)

There upon the Aziz's wife said to them: "Have you seen him? This is that man about which you have taunted me."

She continued: "Indeed I have tried to take control of his heart but he did not respond to my efforts."

But "I say, If he does not listen to my demands, he will be imprisoned and will be dishonoured."

When Yusuf ﷺ heard this, and saw the conduct of the Aziz's wife and the other women, he prayed to Allah:

> "O My Lord, the thing to which they call me- the inside of the prison is more preferable to me and if you do not ward off from me their plans, and if you do not help me, I may be inclined towards them and thereby join the ranks of the ignorant."

So his Lord hearkened unto him (in his prayer) and turned away from him their snare.

Verily He heareth and knoweth (all things) (12:34)

Now the Aziz having seen all the signs from Yusuf and having noticed the scandal in which his wife was involved, decided that best would be to imprison Yusuf for a time until such time that the story is removed from the minds of people and so Yusuf ﷺ had to go to jail.

Yusuf ﷺ in Prison

It is mentioned in the Torah that even in jail Yusuf (*Alaihis Salãm*)'s intellectual ability and in action too he could not be silenced. The jailor entered into his sphare of influnce and all the management affairs of the jail was left in his hands and he was free to do inside the prison as he wished.

Tableegh in Jail

It was a greatly fortunate that two other prisoners entered jail with him. One was the King's wine-maker and the other was the head-baker of the Royal palace. One day both of them came to Yusuf ﷺ and the wine-maker said: "I have seen a dream wherein I saw myself pressing grapes."

The other said:

> "I have seen a dream where in I carry a basket of bread on my head, while the birds eat the bread."

Hearing this Yusuf ﷺ replied: "Undoubtedly of the things Allah has taught me is this that he also taught me the interpretation of dreams. I shall inform you of the meaning of your dreams before your food reaches you. But before I come to that I have some thing else to inform you of. Have you thought of this: Are many gods better or the one true God; who is supreme above every thing. Those whom you worship besides Allah are just a few names which you and your fathers have named them. Sovereignty belongs to Allah

alone. He commands that you only worship Him and no one else. This is the straight path but most people do not know."

(12:39—40)

Then after this call towards guidance Yusuf returned to the interpretation of their dreams.

> "As for you who saw yourself pressing grapes, you will be set free and will again serve the king as wine-maker. And as for you who saw yourself carrying bread, he will be crucified and the birds will pick at his head and eat it."

When Yusuf had told them the interpretation he told the wine-maker, thinking that he will be saved and set free; "Remember me to your King."

But when the wine-maker was finally set free he became so busy in his affairs that he forgot Yusuf (*Alaihis Salãm*)'s claim and Yusuf was forced to remain in prison for a few years.

The King's Dream

While Nabi Yusuf was still in prison it so happened that the king of Egypt also saw a dream, in which seven thin lean cows swallowed seven fat cows. He also saw seven ears of corn which were dry, ate up seven green ears of corn. Soon after this dream the King called all his advisors and asked them to interpret this dream. All of the courtiers were confused at the dream and were unable to do so.

Then the wine-maker remembered how Yusuf had interpreted his dream. He asked the King for a bit of time and he will bring the correct interpretation. With the permission of the King he reached the prison and related the dream to Yusuf , asking for its interpretation. Yusuf

ﷺ immediately gave him the correct interpretation as the Qur'ān states:

> "He said: for seven years you shall sow as is your wont and the harvest that you reap, you shall leave them in their ears, except a little of which you shall eat."
>
> "Then will come after that period seven dreadful years which will devour what you shall have laid by in advance for them. Which you shall have guarded."
>
> "Then will come after that a year in which people will have abundant water and in which they will press (wine and oil)."

The wine-maker came and related the interpretation to the King and the King on hearing of the coming period of drought, said:

> "Bring you, him unto me."

However when the King's Messenger reached Yusuf, Yusuf refused to leave the prison saying he was not prepared to get out of prison like that:

> "Go to your master and ask him to investigate the matter of those women, who cut their hands. Let it fast be known what plans they made. My Lord is quite aware of their plans."

When the King heard this he called those women to him and demanded from them the true story of how they tried to seduce Yusuf. They all replied:

> "Allah preserve us! We knew no evil against him." (12:51)

The wife of the Aziz was also present and when she came to know that it was Yusuf's desire that the truth come out, she declared:

> "Now the truth is manifest (to all). It was I who sought to seduce him from his self. He is indeed of those who are (over) true (and virtuous)."
>
> (12:51)

Now the time had arrived when the women all admitted that Yusuf ﷺ was completely innocent of any evil. When the king realized this his respect for Yusuf ﷺ became profound. He said:

> "Bring him unto me. I will take him specially to serve about my own person."

In response to this order by the King, Yusuf ﷺ was brought to his court and he said to Yusuf ﷺ:

> "Verily today you are, in our preserve, with rank firmly established, and fidelity fully proved."

Then he asked what should be done to combat the effects of the period of starvation that was coming according to the dream's interpretation."

Yusuf ﷺ replied:

> "Set me in charge over the store-houses of the land I will indeed guard them. I am one that knows (their importance)."

The King accepted his suggestion and made Yusuf the treasurer and guardian of the Kingdom. The keys to the store houses was given in his hands and he had full control. Allah says: We granted him '*Eamkeen fil Ardi*'. This is mentioned twice. After being granted that high position he

planned to save the people of Egypt from the period of drought and starvation.

The Period of Famine

Finally the period of famine as prophecied by Yusuf ﷺ, arrived. In Egypt and the surrounding areas a great famine arose and so also in Can'aan.

Nabi Yaqoob ﷺ told his sons: "The Aziz of Egypt has announced that they have corn saved for this time. Go to Egypt and buy corn there."

And so the Caravan from Canaan set forth for Egypt to buy corn.

And the brothers of Yusuf ﷺ came to Egypt, and when they reached him, Yusuf recognised them while they did not recognise him

According to the Torah the brother were accused of being spies and so they were brought to him face to face and he inquired about the condition of the father and the brother Bin-yameen. When he prepared their goods for departure, he said to them that when they come next time, they should bring along their half brother Bin Yameen. "You have seen how I give full measure and that I am hospitable to those arriving from outside. If you do not bring him along, you will get neither sale from me, nor will you find a place with me." (12:59—60)

He then ordered the servants to secretly place the money they had paid for the corn back in their saddle bags. When they returned to Can'aan they told the whole story to Nabi Yaqoob ﷺ. They also told him how the Governor of Egypt had clearly warned them that they will not be sold any corn next time unless Bin Yameen comes along. Therefore

the father should send him along the next time. They promised to look after him and protect him at all times.

Yaqoob ﷺ replied:

> "Shall I trust you will him as I trusted his brother Yusuf ﷺ with you before this? Allah is the best protector and He is the Most Merciful of those who show Mercy."

Then they began to open their luggage and found their money which had been returned to them: They said: "O father what more do we want than this? Give us permission to return to him once more to bring corn and allow Bin Yameen to go with us. We will protect him."

Yaqoob ﷺ replied:

> "I will never send him with you unless you give me your promise on a solemn oath."

There after, after they had sworn a solemn oath the caravan left once more for Egypt with Bin Yameen with them. At the time of parting Nabi Yaqoob ﷺ said to them:

> "O My sons do not enter from one gate but enter by different gates..."
>
> "And when they entered Egypt in the manner suggested by their father, this precaution did not help at all except that it was just a necessity of Yaqoob (*Alaihis Salãm*)'s soul which he discharged. Indeed was he a man of knowledge and we taught him this knowledge But most people do not know." (12:68)

In the mean time when the brother left Canaan, they began to cause Bin Yameen quite a bit trouble. They scorned

him for the lore the father had for him and expressed jealousy at the way in which the Aziz of Egypt made a special point of calling for him to be brought along. But when they reached Egypt:

> "And when they came to Yusuf ﷺ, Yusuf ﷺ made his brother to sit by his side and told him secretly: "I am your brother. Do not be sad at the bad manner in which they treat you." (12:69)

After a few days the Canaany Caravan started to depart. Yusuf ﷺ commanded that their camels be so loaded ad much as they could carry. He also wanted his brother to remain with him by any possible means, but the law in Egypt at that time was that it was prohibited to allow an non-Egyptian to remain behind without a good and acceptable reason. More over Yusuf ﷺ did not at that time wish to expose the truth. And so when the Caravan left he ordered someone to hide the royal goblet in Bin Yameen's bag.

The Caravan had only travelled a short distance when an official from Yusuf (*Alaihis Salãm*)'s side came behind and shouted:

> "O men of this Caravan, you are thieves."
>
> They replied: "What is it that you miss?"
>
> He said: "We Miss the goblet of the King.
>
> For him who produces it is (the reward of) a camel load. I will be bound by it."

They replied: "By Allah you know we did not come here to commit mischief in Egypt and we are not thieves."

The official said: "What is the punishment if you are found to be untruthful?

They replied: "The punishment is this that he in whose luggage the goblet is found, he will have to go as punishment that is the way we punish wrong doers."

They started to search the luggage of the Caravan and the goblet was found in the saddle-bag of Bin-Yameen."

Allah says:

> "Thus did we plot for Yusuf. He could not take his brother by the law of the King except God willed it so." (12:76)

In this way Binyameen was kept back in Egypt. The brothers saw this and remembered the oath they swore to their father. They tried their utmost to make the Aziz to allow Binyameen to depart with them. When all that proved unsuccessful they resolved among themselves to inform the father of the true happenings.

Then for the truth he could inquire from other travellers. With this consultation they returned to Canaan to tell Nabi Yaqoob the truth.

Yaqoob had already experienced the truth from then in the affair of Yusuf.

He said:

> "May but you have contrived a story (good enough) for you. So patience is most fitting for me."

May be Allah will bring them back to me.

For He is indeed full of knowledge and wisdom.

And he turned away from them and said: "How great is my grief for Yusuf!"

And his eyes became white with sorrow and he fell into silent melancholy."

The sons, seeing this sorrow, said:

> "By Allah never will you cease to remember Yusuf until you reach the last extremity of illness or until you die."

Sayeduna Yaqoob ﷺ replied:

> "I only complain of my distraction and anguish to Allah and I know from Allah that which you do not knows."

He continued:

> "O My sons go you and inquire about Yusuf ﷺ and his brother and never give up hope of Allah's Mercy. Truly no one despairs of Allah's Mercy except those truly no one despairs of Allah's Mercy except those who have no faith."

The brothers for the third time decided to go to Egypt and on reaching the King's court expressed their big problem, asking for special kindness and mercy. Nabi Yusuf having listened to their distress and his heart was deeply affected so much so that he felt he could no longer hide the truth from them. At last he said:

> "Do you know how you dealt with Yusuf ﷺ and his brother, not knowing what you were doing?"

Hearing this unexpected conversation, they said:

> "Are you indeed Yusuf ﷺ?"

He replied:

> "Yes I am Yusuf ﷺ and this is my brother. Allah has been gracious to us. Verily he who is righteous and patient, never will Allah suffer the reward to be lost of those who do right."

On hearing this the brothers said:

> "By Allah, Indeed has Allah preferred you above us.
>
> And we certainly have been guilty of sin."

Nabi Yusuf ﷺ saw this distressed state of his brothers and the prophetic mercy in him was stirred. He said to them: "This day let no reproach be cast on you. Allah will forgive you and He is the most Merciful of all those who show Mercy."

He also said to them:

> "Go back to Canaan and take this shirt of mine put it on my father's eyes. Inshallah the light of his eyes will return. And bring the whole family to Egypt."
>
> (12:93)

While all this happened and while the Caravan was on route from Egypt with the shirt of Yusuf ﷺ, Nabi Yaqoob ﷺ was through Divine Revelation getting the smell of Yusuf ﷺ. He exclaimed: "If you are not going to tell me that old age had affected my reason, then I would say with certainty that I get the smell of Yusuf ﷺ."

They all replied: "You are still in your previous madness."

After such a long time you still just think of him."

When the Caravan finally arrived that happened which Yusuf ﷺ fore told.

"Then when the bearer of the good news came,
He cast the shirt over his face and forth with
regained clear sight."

He asked them: "Did I not say to you I know from Allah that which you know not."

For the brothers of Yusuf ﷺ this was very difficult time. They were deeply ashamed and regretful and with heads bent in shame they uttered:

"O father, seek Allah's pardon on our behalf.
Indeed were we great sinner."

Hazrat Ya'qoob ﷺ replied: "I shall pray to Allah for your forgiveness very soon. He is greatly Beneficient, and Merciful. (12:98)

The Family of Yaqoob ﷺ *in Egypt*

Nabi Ya'qoob ﷺ took his whole family and proceeded to Egypt. According to the Torah they were seventy persons in all. When Yusuf ﷺ came to know that his family were enroute to Egypt he quickly came out to welcome them.

When Nabi Yaqoob ﷺ saw his beloved son after such a long time he embraced him and held him against his breast. Then he said: "Now you enter Egypt in safety and with honour."

Carrying them on royal carriages, he brought them to the town and made them get off at the royal palace. Then a special court sassion was held. The father was made to sit at the Royal throne. Then Nabi Yusuf ﷺ himself went to sit on the throne. Then according to the custom of the time all the courtiers fell into prostration before the throne. (Perhaps this form o honouring was permissible in the earlier eras of the Prophets (*Alaihimus Salãm*). Rasulullah ﷺ has declared this

kind of honouring prohibited for this *Ummat* and only declared it permissible for Allah alone.)

The whole family of Yusuf ﷺ did the same and on seeing this, Yusuf ﷺ remembered the dream he had seen in his childhood and said to his father:

> "O father, this is the meaning of the dream which I saw long ago. My Lord has caused it to come true."

Nabi Yusuf ﷺ then prayed:

> "O My Lord, You have granted me governance and have taught me the meanings of dreams and events. O Creator of heavens and earth, You are my Protector in this world and the here after. Let me pass away as a Muslim, submitting unto you and join me in the ranks of the righteous ones." (12:101)

According to the Torah Nabi Yusuf (*Alaihis Salãm*)'s whole family came to settle in Egypt.

Death of Yusuf ﷺ

Nabi Yusuf ﷺ spent a large part of his life in Egypt and he passed away in Egypt at the age of one hundred and ten years. When he died he was embalmed and placed in a coffin. And so it remained until the time of Nabi Musa ﷺ, when according to his *Wassiyyat*, Bani Israel left Egypt, they took the coffin with the body with them and came to bury it in the land of his fore father's i.e. Canaan. It is said his grave is to be found in the neighbourhood of Nablus in Palestine which today falls in Israel.

Matters of Islamic Ethics

1. When a person's personal nature is good and his environment is kept clean and holy, then that person will become known for being a man of noble character and high qualities and he will be endowed with all honourable manners.

2. If a person is steadfast in his belief in Allah and that faith has become very strong, then all the obstacles in his path becomes easy to overcome and after seeing the truth, all those dangers and difficulties become like nothing in his eyes.

3. Whether trials and tests are in the form of calamities or forms of destruction, or whether in the form of wealth or whether in the form of good-seeming ways of acquiring lustful desires, a man should at all times take refuge in Allah and beg of him to grant us steadfastness and strength.

4. When the love of Allah enters into the heart and his lore enters all corners of our hearts, that love becomes the very object of his life and it becomes his second nature at all times to convey Allah's message which virtually flows in all his veins and arteries.

5. Honesty and trust worthiness is such a quality and favour from Allah which may be said to be the key to worldly and spiritual happiness.

6. Self-reliance is one of the highest human qualities. To whosoever Allah has given this quality, he on passing through all worldly calamities will reach high rank in worldly and in spiritual matters.

7. Patience is a very great quality and acts as a shield against many evils. In the Qur'ãn the virtues of

patience has been expounded in more than sixty places and Allah has made the acquisition of high rank subject to its presence.

8. To prefer patience and tolerance at the time when trouble-some brothers show regret is a sign of good-hearted ness.

9. Among the good qualities a very good one is gratitude because it is one of the highest Divine qualities.

10. Hatred and jealousy are qualities which are harmful to those who practise them. And although the one who is hated and the one of whom one is jealous some times suffer losses, but still the one who hates or who is jealous do not find success and as is stated in the Qur'ãn, he loses both the world and the hereafter, unless he repents of his hatred and stops his activities which are done through jealousy.

11. A life of truth, honesty and trustworthiness, patience and gratitude and such high qualities is a life of true success and if a man does not hold these qualities within him, he is not a man, but an animal and is in fact worse.

The life of Hazrat Yusuf ﷺ is an illustration of all these high qualities and his life is an invitation to those qualities.'

> "O My Lord, Creator of heavens and earth you are my Protector in this world and the Hereafter. Let me die as a Muslim submitting to you in obedience And join me in the ranks of the righteous ones." (12:101)

Hazrat Shuaib عليه السلام

Nabi Shuaib عليه السلام was sent to *Madyan*. *Madyan* was the name of a certain tribe who was the offspring of Madeen, a son of Nabi Ibraheem عليه السلام.

Because Nabi Shuaib عليه السلام also belonged to the same tribe, therefore after Nabi Shuaib was sent to them the tribe became known as the people of Shuaib.

Madyan and the People of Aikah

The Qur'ãn has informed us of two things regarding this tribe, viz, firstly that they were resident on an open highway, plain for all to see and secondly that both they and the people of Loot عليه السلام were situated on an open highway.

According to Arab Geography the road leading from Hijaz to Syria, Palestine and Yemen even as far as Egypt for travelling caravans and passing along the eastern shore of the Red Sea is called the plain highway. As for the term *Ashabul-Aykah*, th Arabic refers to the fertile green trees. After knowing these two things we say that Madeen's inhabitants lived on the Eastern shore on the last part of Arabia.

Some *Ulama* have made a distinction between *Madyan* and *Aykah*. But the correct verdict is this that both of them are one and the same people, which if one look at their father

is called *Madyan* and when looking at their Geographic situation is called *Ashabul-Aykah*.

Invitation to the Truth

When Nabi Shuaib ﷺ was sent to his people, he saw that the prevalence of sinful acitivities and disobedience was not only confined to some individuals but found that the whole nation was involved in a whilpool of sin and evil and so deeply were they involved in their iniquitous acts that not for a moment were they realising that they were busy with sins. In fact they considered those deeds as deeds to be boastful of.

Apart from their other acts of disobedience they were especially involved in the following acts:

(a) Idol worship and polytheistic customs and beliefs.

(b) In business and trade they were guilty of taking full payment and not giving full measure or weight.

(c) In all affairs they were guilty of fraud and deceit as well as highway robbery.

According to the general habit of nations, their comfortable life style and their life of plenty, their abundance of wealth and the fertility of their lands and abundance of greenery and moisture made them so proud and arrogant that they looked upon all these things as their own as a result of their own efforts and not for a moment did it outer their minds that all these favours were from Allah and that they have to express gratitude to him for all that. In fact their unmindfulness was the evil that caused numerous faults among them.

Finally Allah reacted and according to His *Sunnat* and in order to show them the correct path, Allah chose one from among themselves with the purpose of saving

them from evil and making God-fearing and sent him to them as a Prophet and Messenger. In this way Nabi Shuaib عليه السلام was sent to them.

He conveyed to them the message of Allah's oneness and to avoid all forms of '*Shirk*' and idol worship as was the general message of all Prophets (*Alaihimus Salãm*). At the same time he had to concentrate on the specific evil deeds of his people and place special emphasis on their social affairs and preached to them on honesty in their affairs.

When Hazrat Shuaib عليه السلام looked at his people's evil deeds he was greatly pained and in giving them admonition towards guidance, called them to the same things to which the previous Prophets called their peoples. He said to them:

> "O people, worship one Allah. no one else is worthy of worship and in your trade affairs be honest and give full measure Do not deceive people in your dealings with them. Uptill yesterday it is possible that I may have been unaware of your deeds. But today Allah's argument against you have come. Now you are no more excused and neither are your going to be pardoned for those deeds. Accept the truth and avoid all falsehood and evil that is the way towards success. Do not commit any mischief in Allah's lands now that Allah has prepared all its means towards righteous ness. If there is *Imãn* and *Yaqeen* in you, then this is the way for you. Do not sit along the highways with the aim of robbing people and do not threaten the one who is bent upon following the right path.

O people! Remember Allah's favours upon you. You were but few and He increased your numbers.

O my people! Just think about these people before you who sought to commit evil in the land, how dreadful was their ending! And if one group of you believe in me and another group does not, the matter does not end there. Wait with patience until Allah passes judgment between us. He is the best Judge."

Nabi Shuaib ﷺ was a very eloquent speaker with a sweet tongue and a strong style of expression, for this reason the *Mufassireen* have named him the *Khateeb* among the Prophets (*Alaihimus Salãm*).

He used sweet words and hard words to call his people to guidance but unfortunately his words had no effect upon them.Apart from a few weak and poor ones no one else would listen to him. They continued on their evil ways and continued to mislead others. In fact they sat along the way to intercept those wanting to come to him, encouraging them to steer clear of Nabi Shuaib ﷺ. If they found the chance they resorted to robbing people and if and when someone came so far as to accept the truth they threatened him. But in spite of all that Nabi Shuaib ﷺ continued his mission. Then those who were proud of their high position among the people, said to him:

"O Shuaib, one out of two things will surely come to pass: Either will we expel you and those who believe in you from our town or we will force you to return to our religion."

Shuaib ﷺ replied: "If we consider your religion wrong and false and are forced to follow it, that will be a great injustice. And seeing that Allah had saved us from your religion and if we are to return to it, it will mean we have spoke an untruth and fabricated a lie against Allah. This is impossible. But if Allah wants anything he does what He wishes. His knowledge is hidden over all things. We only rely on Him."

> O Lord, Judge between us and our people with truth. You are the best Judge.

When the leaders of the people saw the resolate manner of his reply, they turned away and said to the people:

> "Behold, If you obeyed Shuaib, you will be destroyed."

Shuaib also said: "Allah has sent me that I may use all my powers to rectify your lives. And whatever I say to you, I bring to you Allah's proof for that, But alas! You see these clear signs and still remain on your disobedient and rebellious ways and there is not one form of opposition which you have discarded. And yet I do not ask of you any payment for the message of guidance I bring to you; and I seek not from you any worldly benefit there from. My reward lies only with Allah. If now you fail to heed my call, I am afraid and fear the coming of punishment which will destroy you. The decree has been passed and nothing will turn it away or direct it from your side.

With a frown on their fore heads from displeasures the leaders of the nation turned away and said:

> "O Shuaib! Does your *Salaah* desire from us that we should leave aside worshipping the gods of our fore fathers and we should not have

> the right to do with our wealth as we see fit. If we are going to discard giving small measure in our trade dealings and if we are going to stop unfair dealings in business, and deceiving clients, we will become bankrupt and poor. In the light of such teachings can one of us look upon you as a true guide?

Nabi Shuaib ﷺ replied in a passion manner and with love:

> "O people, I fear that your fearlessness and your disobedience against Allah will bring the same results which before now happened to the people of Nooh, Hood, Saulih and Loot (*Alaihimus Salãm*)."

Still nothing happened positively. He continued:

> "O people, bend down before Allah and seek forgiveness from Him for your sins. Repent to Him. He is Merciful and He will forgive your sins."

Hearing this the chiefs and leaders replied:

> "O Shuaib, we do not understand what you say. You are the weakest and poorest among us. If what your say is true then your position would be so much better than ours. We only fear for your family and tribe, otherwise we would stone you to death so that you will not be successful over us."

Nabi Shuaib ﷺ replied:

> "Alas! Is my family and tribe more to be feared than Allah. And after all Allah knows all your deeds good an bad and is all knowing all seeing."

But if still you will not listen to my please, you can continue what you do now, but Allah will show His judgement as to who is more fitting to receive His punishment and who is untrue in his speech. You wait for it. I too will wait for it."

At last that happened which is Allah's everlasting Law. That is after he had sent His arguments and Proofs, if the people still insist in their evil deeds, jeering at the truth, becoming an obstacle in the spread of the truth, Allah's punishment came to put on end to life of iniquity and evil. And so He made them a warning sign for coming generation.

The Sort of Punishment

The Qur'ãn states that the people of Nabi Shuaib were made to suffer two types of punishment One, was an earthquake and two, a fire raining down on them from the skies.

While they were comforebly in their homes a dressed ful earth quake shook the earth suddenly and before its effect wore off fire started raining down on them. The result was that the next morning observers saw the erst while arrogant and disobedient people were lying down with their faces to the ground. The Qur'ãn states:

> "So the earthquake took them unawares and they lay prostrate in their homes in the morning." (7:78)

And:

> "Then the punishment of a day of over shadowing gloom seized them, and that was the penalty of a great day. (26:189)

The Grave of Hazrat Shuaib عليه السلام

In Hadramaut there is a grave which the inhabitants claim is the grave of Nabi Shuaib عليه السلام who came to settle there after the destruction of madyan. It is said he passed away here.

Lessons and Warnings

1. In Islam the rights of other human beings, correct social relations, honesty in dealings and trustworthiness are considered of such importance that Allah should send a special messenger with the purpose of correcting wrong actions in this field.
2. To fail to give another his full measure in business is such illness that as a bad character trait will increase and increase that it will cause the bad point of destroying the rights of others, thereby causing the cutting off of honour and respect as well as mutual relations of love and brotherhood, and making place for such evils as greed, selfishness, envy and jealousy.
3. To give correct measure is not only confined to the buying and selling of commodoties. But the human beings character should be such that in his dealings with other persons he should endeavour to live up to all their rights and responsibilities towards them, and deal with them with complete justice.
4. To avoid dishonesty in weighing and me assuring and to practise justice is a test for man's dealings with others, because he who does not take precaution in such small matters how can he be trusted in major worldly and spiritual matters.

5. There is no crime so great as to commit evil in the land after it has been fully rectified. That is the basis of such evils as injustic, arrogance and murder and attacking people's character.

6. From a study of the lives of the Prophets (*Alaihimus Salãm*) and their true followers we see that the Prophets (*Alaihimus Salãm*) brought clear arguments, showed Allah'special signs and invited to His ways with love and mercy and get did not demand any reward from their people. Yet in response to that it has always been a reply that "we will stone you to death," "we will kill you." In fact they were not even prepared to accept the presence of the Prophets (*Alaihimus Salãm*) among them. And in the end there was also the challenge of "bring forth the punishment with which you threaten us."

7. That normally is the last step in the story after which Allah's Law of Retribution comes into operation, whereby the rebellious, arrogance and evil-doing people are punished and destroyed to become a lesson for coming generations.

Nabi Shuaib ﷺ in the Qur'ãn

The story of Nabi Shuaib ﷺ and his people is told in *Surah A'raaf*, *Surah Hood* and in *Shu'araa* with somewhat of detail. In *Surah Hijr* and *Ankabut* it is mentioned concisely.

Hazrat Musa and Hazrat Haroon

(Alaihimus Salām)

Bani Israel in Egypt

During the story on Nabi Yusuf ﷺ mention was made of Bani Israel. When Nabi Yaqoob ﷺ and his sons met Yusuf ﷺ after many years, the whole family i.e., the children of Israel moved from Canaan and came to settle in Egypt. Now after a few centuries in the discussion on the history of Nabi Musa ﷺ the Qur'ān again tells the story of Bani Israel in considerable detail.

From the details in the Torah, Nabi Yusuf ﷺ applied to the King of Egypt to grant the land of Jaeshaan (Goshen) to his father and the family. This request was granted with great pleasure. These details show that during the time from Nabi Yusuf ﷺ to Nabi Musa ﷺ. Bani Israel remained settled in Egypt. Their numbers increased to about 600,000

(According to the national Geographic Magazine of January 1976 they were 600 families in just under 15000 persons).

Fir'own

Fir'own is the name given to the Kings of Egypt. It is not the name of any specific King. According to history it is said that from 3000 years B.C. upto the era of Alexander the Great 21 dynasties ruled over Egypt. The name of the ruler over Egypt during Nabi Musa (*Alaihis Salãm*)'s era cannot be given with complete certainty. For that reason the ruler of that era is known as Fir'own.

Fir'own's Dream

According to the Torah and historians, Firown's enmity towards Bani Israel started as a result of fortune-tellers and astrologers informing him that his government was going to come to an end as a result of an Israeli young boy.

According to another report Fir'own saw a dreadful dream and the fortune -tellers and astrologers informed him that the meaning was that his rule would come to an end as a result of an Israeli boy. There upon he formed a group of men to investigate and search for all new-born Israeli boys to kill them, leaving the girls to live.

Birth of Musa عليه السلام

The lineage of Nabi Musa عليه السلام is connected to Hazrat Yaqoob عليه السلام with a few generations between them. His father's name was Imraan and his mother was Yukabad. Musa عليه السلام was born in the house of Imraan at such a time when firown had already passed a decree that all Israeli new born boys were to be killed. For about three months the birth was kept a secret so that no one outside came to know of it.

At such a delicate and dangerous time Allah's help and He cast into the mother's heart that she should make a coffin-

like box to be polished ever with grease to prevent water from entering into it. She was inspired to place the chiled in it and to put the box on the river Nile.

She did as she was inspired to do and ordered her daughter to keep the box in view, walking along the bank of the Nile as it flowed along. Allah had promised He would bring him back to her, and make him a Messenger of His.

Brought up in the House of Fir'own

The sister followed the box, walking along the bank of the Nile. Finally she saw the box stopping in the reeds in front of the palace of Fir'own. One of the women from the house hold of Fir'own had the box picked up from the water and taken to the palace. The sister became very pleased and in order to find out details of what transpired she joined and mixed with the servants.

The mother was impatiently waiting for news of her child when the daughter came to tell her the full story, saying:

> "You must now come and look after your child thank Allah for having been true to His promise."

In this manner Allah made an arrangement for the rearing of Musa ﷺ.

Musa (Alaihis Salãm)'s Exit from Egypt

For quite a period Musa ﷺ grew up and was reared in the royal palace until he entered the stage of his youth and finally became strong in body. He because a man inspiring awe in others with a special kind of dignity about him. He had come to that he was actually an Israeli with no blood relationship with the Egyptians.

He noticed the great injustices under which Bani Israel was suffering and how they were treated so that they lived a life of humiliation, like slaves. Seeing all this affected him badly and on various occasions he exerted himself for the help and protection of the Israelites.

Once he was walking somewhere on the outskirts of town. He saw an Egyptian fighting with an Israelite with the aim of facing the Israelite to do some work. The Israelite saw Musa and asked him for help. Musa became angry at the injustice of the Egyptian. He tried to get Egyptian to stop, but he would not heed. He went nearer, became angry and struck the Egyptian one blow. The Egyptian immediately fell down dead. This filled Nabi Musa with sorrow and regret. It was not his aim to kill the man. In his heart he immediately fell down dead. This filled Nabi Musa he immediately expressed his regret and remorse, saying:

> "This is the doing of *Shaitan*. He is the one who pats man on the wrong path."

He prayed to Allah:

> "O Allah all that happened was done unintentionally I seek your pardon and forgiveness."

Allah immediately forgave his fault. The news of the killing of the Egyptian became spread all over, but nobody knew the killer. Later they laid a change with Fir'own, saying that the killing must have been the work of an Israelite. They demanded that the killer be found and brought to justice. Fir'own replied he could not take revenge against the whole Israelite nation but promised that if the murderer was brought to him, he would act.

The next day it so happened that Musa was again walking on the outskirts of the town when he saw the same Israelite involved in a fight with another Egyptian. The Egyptian had the upper hand over the Israelite. Again he saw Musa and again he asked for help.

Seeing this Nabi Musa became doubly displeased. On the one side was the injustice of the Egyptian and on the other side the Israelite's making such a noise. At the same time he remembered the previous day's happening. He stretched forth his hand to stop the Egyptian while at the same time scolding the Israelite:

"You are truly it is clear, a quarrelsome fellow."

When the Israeli saw the hand stretched in his direction and heard the voice with displeasure in it, he thought Nabi Musa was about to attack him, he uttered in a fearful voice:

"O Musa , do you wish to kill me as you killed a man yesterday?"

The Egyptian broke loose and ran off to tell the whole story to the authorities and to inform Fir'own that the killer of the Egyptian was Musa . Fir'own gave instructions to the jailor to arrest Musa immediately. Among those present when this instruction was given was one who had great love for Musa . This man left there and came running Musa before he could be arrested and told him of his impending arrest. He advised Musa to save himself by fleeing from Egypt to where they will not be able to lay hands on him. Nabi Musa accepted his advice and quietly slipped out of Egypt in the direction of Mad'yan (Midian).

Musa (Alaihis Salãm)'s Hijrat towards Madyan

In the discussion on Nabi Shuaib ﷺ we dealt with the land of *Madyan*. This land is situated about eight manzils from Egypt. Nabi Musa ﷺ fled from Egypt due to fear for Fir'own. This fleeing was very sudden and therefore there was none to accompany him without away provisions for the road and he was in fact bare-footed. In this imprepared state Musa ﷺ entered the land of *Madyan*.

The Waters of Madyan

On entering Madyan he saw a well with a watering place where people were crowding to water their animals. He also saw two young girls standing on one side with their sheep and goats, waiting, but being prevented from coming to the water.

Nabi Musa ﷺ saw this and inquired from them: "why do you not water your animal? why do you stand here?"

They replied:

> "We are forced to wait. If we move forward with our animals these stronger men force us back. Our father is very old and he is unable to ward off this problem. So when these people are finished watering their animals, then only can we water our animals and return. This is what happens here every day."

Hearing this made Musa ﷺ quite angry. He stepped forward and went in among the crowd, pushing them aside. He then took the big bucket and pulled water by himself and gave their animals to drink. The people who were standing there was greatly displeased at this incident but seeing the powerful figure and strength of Musa ﷺ, they were over-awed into silence.

When the girl's animals had drunk they returned home. Their father was surprised at their early return and the girls told him the whole story of how a man had helped them. The father then ordered them to go and bring the man to him.

At that time Nabi Musa ﷺ after watering the animals sat down in the shade of a tree, an exile on travel, being hungry and without any refuge.

He lifted up his hands in prayer:

> "O Lord, I am in need of any good that you send me." (28:24)

When the one girl came there she found him sitting under the tree. She said to him shyly: "My father calls you. He wants to reward you for your goodness."

Nabi Musa ﷺ rose up and took the road to the house of her father as directed by her. Soon he reached there. First they gave him to eat and then listened to his story. Musa ﷺ told the story of his birth and related all the injustices of Fir'own. Then the old man said:

> "Praise be to Allah. You have now been saved from the claws of the unjust people. Do not fear."

(The Qur'ãn called the old man a "*Shaikh Kabeer*").

Marriage to the Daughter of the Shaikh

The girl who came to call Musa ﷺ said to her father:

> "O father engage him on wages, as a herdsman and to give the animals water to drink. The best of men to empty is he who is strong and trust worthy." (28:26)

When the father heard this suggestion, he was pleased. And said to Musa :

> "If you are to remain with me in service for eight years, herding my sheep, I will give you my daughter in marriage. If you are going to stay two more years later, completing ten years it will be the *Mahr*.

Nabi Musa accepted the condition and asked that it be left at his discretion.

That he may decide which of the two periods to complete.

After the completion of the period the old man married Musa to his daughter.

> (Maulana Seoharwy has clarified that the old man whom the Qur'ān calls the *Shaikh Kabeer* was not Nabi Shuaib because this period was several centuries after the time of Nabi Shuahib).

The Sacred Valley

After the marriage Nabi Musa stayed with his father-in-law until the end of the agreed period. The *Mufassireen* mention that Musa completed the full period.

After the marriage Nabi Musa and his new family continued to look after the sheep of his father-in-law and during the grazing period he managed to move quite a distance away from Madyan. This was not unusual for flock-herding. The night was quite cold and he was in search of some fire by which they could warm themselves. Ahead of him Mount Sina: came into view. This was the western side of the Sinai peninsula, one day journey from *Madyan* at

near where the Red Sea forms two spots of water around the peninsula on the road leading to Egypt.

Musa عليه السلام used flintstone to try and light a fire but due to the excessive cold he could not light a fire. As he looked ahead of him towards the '*Waadee Ayman*'

he saw Fire burning in distance. He told his wife to remain where they were: "I shall go and bring fire for us to warm ourselves and if at the fire I should find some guide, he could show us the way after we had lost the way."

The Qur'ãn puts it this way:

> "Musa عليه السلام said to his wife: Tarry you here. I see a fire.
>
> Perhaps I can bring you some burning brand there from or find some guidance at the fire."
>
> (20:10)

Musa عليه السلام as Messenger

It is Allah's great favour that Musa عليه السلام went to fetch fire and there he found prophet hood and became a Messenger.

Musa عليه السلام saw something wonderful about the fire. Light was shining upon a bush but the fire did neither burn the trees nor was the fire extinguished. Seeing this he went nearer, but the nearer he came the further the fire went away.

Musa عليه السلام started feeling fear in himself and wanted to return from there. As he was about to return, the fire came nearer and he heard a voice saying to him: "O Musa عليه السلام, I am Allah, creator of the Universe. (28:30)

> "When Musa عليه السلام came near to the fire it was called out, O Musa عليه السلام, I am your Lord. Take

> off your shoes, You are standing in the sacred valley of Tuwa and behold, I have chosen you to be my Messenger. So listen to what is revealed to you." (20:11—13)

When Musa heard this voice from Allah's side and he realized that at that moment he was favourd with great spiritual wealth which is the highest rank of superiority to which any human could reach and also realized that this was Allah's final sign of love towards him. He was astonished and remained silent until the voice again started, asking him:

> "What is that in your right hand?"

Musa replied: "It is my staff, on which I lean and with which during my flock-herding, I cut off grass and leaves for the sheep.

Then Allah said: "Throw it down, O Musa!"

Musa did as he was ordered:

> "Musa threw it down and behold! It was a snake active in motion. (20:20)

Seeing this Musa was astonished and according to human nature began to flee from there. But once again to voice spoke:

> "Seize it in your hand and fear not. We shall at once return it to its former state." (20:21)

The staff had two branches. Now the two branches appeared as the mouth of the serpent snake. Musa was worried but the nearness of Allah caused calmness to descend upon him. Thus without fear he stretched his hand at the hear of the snake and as he touched it the snake became

transformed into a stick. Now the next command came to Musa عليه السلام to put his hand against his side and to put the hand into his bosom and it will come out while without any sickness. He did this and so it became white, shining. Then he was ordered to do so once more and the hand returned to its former natural state.

Then Allah informed him:

> "O Musa عليه السلام, these are to you two signs of your Prophethood and Messengership. This is your assistance in the conveying the Message. Just as we had blessed you with Prophethood and Messengership so also we grant you these two miracles (*Moujizaat*)."
>
> "These are two credentials from your Lord to Fir'own and his chiefs. For truly they are people rebellious and wicked." (28:32)
>
> "Now go and show Fir'own and his people the path of guidance.
>
> He has done much rebellious things and disobedience and he has in his arrogance and pride performed many injustices.
>
> He has made Bani Israel into slaves. So proceed and deliver them from slavery."

Nabi Musa عليه السلام replied: "O Lord, I have once killed one Egyptian and I fear that for that they will kill me in return. I also fear they will reject me and call me a liar. Since you have given me this high office, I beg of you, expand for me my breast with light and make this task easy for me, and remove from my tongue the knot that is there: so that people may understand me.

And since I have no fluency in my tongue, and my brother Haroon is more eloquent than me, so please honour him also with Prophethood and join him with me in this task."

Allah responded, consoling him that he should take the message and show Fir'own the right path. "He will not be able to harm you. My help will be with you. And the signs we have granted you will be your source of success. In the end you will be successful. We have granted your requests and have made your brother Haroon your partner in this task. And when you proceed to Fir'own and his people to call them to guidance, speak to them in kindly sweet terms. Perhaps he may accept sound advice, fear Allah and desist from injustice and persecution."

> "And so the fair promise of your Lord was fulfilled for the children of Israel because they had patience and constancy And we levelled to the ground the great works and fine buildings which Fir'own and his people erected." (7:137)
>
> "And he was arrogant and insolent in the land, beyond reason, He and his hosts: they thought that they would not have to return to us."
>
> Then we seized him and his hosts and we flung them into the Sea.
>
> Now behold what was the end of those who did wrong." (28:39—40)
>
> "How many were the gardens and springs they left behind?
>
> And corn fields and noble buildings,
>
> And wealth (and conveniences of life)
>
> where in they had taken such delight.

Thus (was their and)

And we made other people inherit (those things).

And neither heavens nor earth shed a tear over them: No, were they given a respite (again).

(64:27—28)

MUSA RETURNS TO EGYPT AND HAZRAT HAROON RECEIVES PROPHETHOOD

Entry to Egypt

After Hazrat Musa had been honoured with Prophethood and favoured which conversing with Allah and after having been given the good news of his eventual success in his mission, he returned from the sacred valley back to where his wife was awaiting his return. From there he took his wife with him as he set forth enroute to Egypt. When he finally reached Egypt, it was night time. Quietly he reached the family home without entering it. He appeared as a traveller arriving at a home well-known for its hospitality towards strangers. The mother acted most hospitably towards them.

Then, his big brother Haroon arrived. Haroon had in the meantime also been blessed with Prophethood and through revelation he had been informed of Musa (*Alaihis Salãm*)'s whole story. He embraced Musa and then took them into the house and informed the mother of the whole situation. The whole family was called and all of them met Musa and was told of his previous year's experiences.

When the mother met them she was greatly pleased.

Preaching the Truth in Fir'owns Court

After the two brothers had met each other, they decided among themselves that they will have to go to Fir'own in accordance with the command of Allah. They both reached the court of Fir'own and entered without any fear. As they neared his throne they explained the reason for their coming and started to speak:

> "Musa ﷺ said: O Fir'own! I am a messenger from the cherisher and creator of the worlds. It is not fitting for me express to you from Allah's side anything else but the truth and what is correct. I have brought to you signs from Allah. So send Bani Israel with me (and release them from slavery). (7:104—105)

Fir'own replied:

> "Did we not cherish you as a child among us and did you not stay among us many years of your life? And you did a deed of yours, which (you know) you did. And you are truly ungrateful. (26:19)

Musa ﷺ replied:

> "I did it when I was in error.
>
> So I fled from you when I feared you.
>
> But my Lord has since invested me with judgement (and wisdom) and appointed me as one of his Prophets (*Alaihimus Salãm*)."

> And this is the favour with which you reproach me and you have enslaved the children of Israel."

Then Fir'own asked:

> "And what is the Cherisher and Creator of the worlds?"

Nabi Musa responded: "He is that Being who created you as well as your fore-fathers before you. It was He who brought you and your fore father's into existence and Cherished you.

When Fir'own heard this he told the courtiers: "I fear that this man who calls himself a Prophet and messenger is a mad man.

Nabi Musa noticed that Fir'own could not form any answer to his reply, decided to continue to expound Allah's qualities of cherishing and he continued: "He is the Creator and Lord of all that lies in the East and the west and what lies in between them. All these are His creations. Him do I call the *Rabbul Aalameen*. If only you should use your reason, you will realize this with ease."

Then Nabi Musa again reminded him that the path which he had chosen was wrong. The Lord of the worlds is the only one who is deserving of being worshipped and to accept anyone else as cherisher is '*Shirk*'.

"O Fir'own desist. The Lord of the worlds have revealed unto me that he who opposes this truth and rejects it or turns away from it, will be considered as deserving His punishment."

> "Verily it has been revealed to us that the penalty awaits those who reject and turn away. (20:48)

Thereupon Fir'own repeated his question: "who, then, O Musa is the Lord of you two?"

Nabi Musa ﷺ responded: "Our Lord is He who gave to each created thing its form and nature and further gave it guidance."

Fir'own inquired: "What is the condition of previous generations."

Musa ﷺ replied: "The knowledge of that is with my Lord, duly recorded my Lord never erros or forgets.

He who has made for you the earth as a carpet, spread out, has enabled you to go about therein by roads (and channels). And has sent down rain from the Sky and with it produced diverse pairs of plants Each separate from the other.

Eat (for yourself) and pasture your cattle.

Verily in this are signs for men endued with understanding. From this earth did we create you, and into it shall we return you And from it shall into it shall we return you And from it shall we bring you out once again."

(20: 52—54)

Haroon (Alaihis Salãm)'s Actions

The *Ulama* of *Tafseer* state that during the course of the conversation between Fir'own and Nabi Musa ﷺ, Nabi Haroon ﷺ served as Musa (*Alaihis Salãm*)'s interpreter and his duty was to relate Nabi Musa (*Alaihis Salãm*)'s words and arguments with clear proofs and in more eloquent terms and this is what he did.

Fir'own's Reaction

The above type of conversations continued in various gatherings. Then in the end Fir'own said to his people by way of ending off the talks:

O people I know of no other god for you except myself." (28:38)

Then he ordered his adviser: "O Haamaan! Prepare for me a very high palace so that I may attain the ways and means.

The ways and means of reaching the heavens and that I may mount up to the God of Musa ﷺ. But as far as I am concerned I think (Musa ﷺ) is a liar." (40:36—37)

Haamaan

As far as Haamaan is concerned the Qur'ãn does not specifically state whether it is the name of a person or the name of an official post. Neither does the Qur'ãn state who then he actually prepared such a building or not. The Torah also is silent upon this point.

Exhibition in Fir'own's Court

Fir'own's opposition increased all the while until he said:

"If you have another god besides me, I shall surely imprison you." (29:22)

Musa ﷺ replied: "Will you do that even after I have brought to you clear signs?"

Fir'own said: "If indeed you have come with a sign, show it, if you are telling the truth. (7:106)

Thereupon Nabi Musa ﷺ stepped forward and threw down his staff in front of Fir'own. Immediately it changed into a large snake without being deceit of their eyes. Then he cast his hand into his bosom and as he extracted it was shining like a star.

When the courtiers saw how their King was defeated in this conservation and saw the Israelite bringing forth these miracles they became agitated an in anguish exclaimed: "Without doubt this is a very skilful sorcerer and magician. He has done all devised this deceitful trick that he may be victorious over you and take you out of your land. Now we must think what we are to do."

Finally it was decided among them that some respite should be granted to Musa and Haroon for the time being. After further consultation among them it was decided that they should gather all the skilful magicians from all over the Kingdom in the capital so that they can oppose Musa in combat. They were certain that Musa would be defeated and all his intentions will come to naught. Then Fir'own said to Musa :

> "We understand full well that your intention is to put us out of Egypt. Hence it is best that we shall gather all the skilful Magicians to defeat you. Now there should be a fixed day agreed to between you and us to when the confrontation shall be, after which neither will you be able to pull out of it and neither will we be able to withhold ourselves from the agreement."

Nabi Musa answered: "It is best that confrontation should take place on the day called '*Yawm-uz-Zeenat*'- the festival day. On that day as the sun rises in the heavens we should gather on the plain."

Note: The Egyptians had a festival day called '*Wafa-an-Neel*'. This was considered the greatest festival day of the year.

And so it was agreed on '*Yawm-uz-Zeena*'. Fir'own immediately sent a message to all over his Kingdom that

wherever there was a skilful magician, he should be sent to the capital as soon as possible.

Finally the '*Yawm-uz-Zeenat*' arrived with all his royal pomp and splendour Fir'own was sitting on his throne on the plain. Ground him the courtiers were arranged according to their ranks. Thousands of spectators had come to see the confrontation between truth and false-hood. On the one side were all the famous Egyptian magicians from all over the Kingdom with all their tools. On the other side stood Allah's Messenger ﷺ and his brother Haroon ﷺ.

The Magicians came to Fir'own and asked: "If we today defeat Musa ﷺ and are victorious over him, will there be a reward and special honour for us.

Fir'own replied: "Undoubtedly, Not only that, you will also become of the near and honoured ones in our court."

After the Magicians had received this assurance they turned to Nabi Musa ﷺ and Musa ﷺ told them: "Fir'own you! do not fabricate a lie against Allah. Let it not be such that He send a punishment, which will destroy you. Whoever fabricates lies against Allah will not be successful.

Then the Magicians said: "O Musa ﷺ, either, you throw down your staff or we will throw down."

Musa ﷺ replied: "You, throw down."

When the magicians had thrown their sticks and ropes, the people's eyes were deceived and terror was struck into them. For they showed a great feat of Magic." (7:116)

Then Allah revealed to Musa ﷺ: "Throw down your staff."

As he threw his staff and the snake ate up all that they had thrown down and in this way the truth became manifest

and their actions became naught. They were defeated."

(7:117—118)

When the Magicians saw the miracle all of them fell into prostration and said: "We believe in Lord who is the Lord of Musa ﷺ and Haroon ﷺ."

Seeing this Fir'own exclaimed:

"What, do you believe in Musa ﷺ without my permission?

Surely he is your leader who taught you magic.

See what I am going to do! I shall cut off your hands and feet on opposite sides and I will crucify you on date palm trees."

However when true *Iman* enters into a person, even if but for a short while, it creates such spiritual strength that no power in the world, no matter how strong cannot cause him to fear.

The result was that the threats of Fir'own could not cast fear into the hearts of the Magicians: They declared:

> "We cannot turn away from the clear proofs of the truth shown to us today and from that Allah who created us to obey your orders. Do whatever you wish. You can only decree regarding the life of this world. We have accepted faith in our Lord that He may pardon our faults especially our faults in working Magic which you forced us to do. For us Allah is best and He is the everlasting one." (20:72—73)

Hence in this confrontation between truth and false hood, Fir'own and his supporters had a great defeat and he was humiliated in the

presence of all. And Allah was true to His promise as Musa ﵇ was victorious. Moreover apart from the Magicians a small group of Israelites became followers of Musa ﵇.

"But none believed in Musa ﵇ except some children of his people, Because of the fear of Fir'own and his chiefs lest they should persecute them." (10:83)

Having noticed to limited success of Nabi Musa ﵇ a group from among the people of Fir'own said to him: "will you leave Musa ﵇ and his people to spread mischief in the land and to abandon you and your gods? Fir'own said: "We will slay their male children and their females we will leave alive (to become slave-girls)." (7:127)

This was Fir'own's second announcement regarding the children of Bani Israel.

The Anxiety of Bani Israel

When Nabi Musa ﵇ came to know of the actions Fir'own and his courtiers planned against Bani Israel, he gathered the Israelites and advised them to have patience and to rely on Allah. They heard him and answered: "O Musa ﵇ we were caught up in calamities before this. Since you have appeared we have had hopes of improvements, but now we are still caught up in those same miseries. Now we are facing great hardship."

Nabi Musa ﵇ consoled them that Allah's promise is true. "Fear not. You will be victorious in the end. Your enemy will have to face destruction. Remember the Master of this earth is not Fir'own or his people, but Allah the Lord of the worlds who is One invested with complete authority. And

whosoever of His servants he wishes its make to master, he makes the Masters. And the good ending is for the righteous ones."

He told them:

> "The evil deeds and injustices of Fir'own are not yet at an end. He is still not agreeable to allow the Israelites and capture believers to leave Egypt."

Then he prayed: "O Allah, for the wealth you have given Fir'own, instead of him being grateful, he practises tyranny and injustice on your servants. And neither does he accept the path of truth, nor does he allow others to accept it. He uses all force to stop them. Now Lord, let him taste his evil deed's. Destroy his wealth, about which he is so proud, and just as he kicks against the truth of *Imãn*, let it be that instead being enriched with the wealth of *Imãn*, a terrible punishment should overtake him that will be a lesson for others.

The Reaction of Fir'own

Fir'own was still burning on the inside for the defeat he suffered at the hands of Nabi Musa ﷺ and even at his order to kill the male children of Bani Israel he did not derive peace of mind. Finally he said: "Let me kill Musa ﷺ. Let him them call his Lord."

Nabi came to hear of this and said: "I seek refuge in my Lord and your Lord from a very proud and arrogant one who does not believe in the day of Reckoning."

The Believing Egyptian

While Fir'own and his chiefs were having this conversation, there was in their gathering an Egyptian

believers in Musa ﷺ who upto now was keeping his conversion to Islam secret. He started defending Nabi Musa ﷺ against his own chiefs saying that they wish to kill somebody for speaking the truth, "that my Lord is Allah" and who has brought some clear signs to prove the truth of his message. "Even if he is a liar, then his untruthfullness will cause you no harm. And if he is truthful, then fear the warnings which he recites to you from Allah's side."

Fir'own then cut short the speech of the believer: "I give you that advice which I consider correct in my view and utter a word in your interest. The believer then continued: "O my people, I fear lest our condition become like the people of Nooh, Aad and Thamood, or others after then. Allah does not perform any injustice against any people but those people's destruction were as a result of their own deeds. Whatever you are planning against Musa ﷺ today, you are today is the process of thinking about your own position. I fear for you that day of *Qiyamat* when one will call the other but on that day there will be no one to save you from the punishment of Allah."

O chiefs of the people, you are such that when Yusuf ﷺ came to deliver Allah's message, your fathers were caught up in doubts and refused to believe in him. And when he died, you said: "Now Allah will not send any Messenger." Now you do the same to Musa ﷺ. For Allah's sake, understand and choose the right path."

When Fir'own and chiefs heard this speech of the Egyptian believer, their attention was drawn away from Musa ﷺ to this man, and Fir'own intended to first deal with him and finish him off. But Allah did not allow him to carry out this intention and saved him from their evil intention.

Fir'own's Annoucement

When Fir'own and his chiefs failed to defeat Musa ﷺ, he announced among his people: "O people, am I not the master of the throne? And is not the rivers flowing under the feet of my government? Do you not see my glory and splendour? Am I superior or this one who has no honour and is unable to speak properly? If indeed he (is honoured in Allah's sight), then why does not golden bracelets fall down upon him from the heavens and why does not the angels come with him accompanying him in procession."

The Wrath of Allah on the Egyptians

The Message of guidance brought by Hazrat Musa ﷺ had absolutely no effect on Fir'own and his chiefs and apart from very few all the other Egyptians followed him and in response to Fir'own's call they began to kill the male children of Bani Israel. They started degrading Nabi Musa ﷺ and Fir'own started spreading the belief in his lordship and divinity.

Then Allah revealed to Nabi Musa ﷺ to inform Fir'own that it that trend was going to continue then Allah's punishment was going to descend. Thereupon Fir'own and his people paid no attention, then one after the other various forms of punishment descended upon them. Fir'own then adopted this strategy: when a certain form of calamity descended they told Musa ﷺ that they promise to believe. He should pray to Allah to remove the calamity. And once Musa ﷺ had prayed and the calamity was removed he went bad on his promise.

Another calamity would descent and again he would promise to allow Bani Israel to leave Egypt, and again

Musa ﷺ would pray to the calamity to be removed only for Fir'own to go back on his word.

In this manner various calamities by way of punishment descended. The Qur'ãn puts it thus:

> "And we punished the people of Fir'own with years of drought and shortness of crops that they might receive admonition....
>
> So we sent in them plagues, whole sale death, locusts, lice frogs and bloody signs openly self explained." (7:130—133)

In the verse the *Muffassireen* have written about the lice and the frogs, that it so happened that there was not a thing in Egypt which people ate or wore or used in which these things did not appear. As for as blood was concerned, the water of the Nile turned to blood and the bloody taste, and smell of it made it very difficult to drink. Even the fish in the water died.

As for lice, this is a word with very wide meanings. The best way to understand it is that Allah sent a plague of lice over Egypt. This caused smell flies to be produced in all eatables which in turn caused destructive worms to be produced which caused a kind of insect of to be produced in grains. All those destructive worms and insects are called 'lice'.

Bani Israel's Departure form Egypt

When matters became such that even these curses which descended on Egypt could not affect them, Allah informed Nabi Musa ﷺ: "Now the time has come for you to take Bani Israel from Egypt to the land of their fore fathers." Hence Nabi Musa ﷺ and Haroon ﷺ secretly took Bani Israel by

night in the direction of the Red Sed. Before they left they did not even hand back to the Egyptian women their jewelory and costly materials, which they had borrowed from them on the occasion of a special festival day. They feared that they did that the Egyptians would come to know of their plan to flee from Egypt.

Fir'own's Drowning

Nabi Musa ﷺ consoled the Israelites: "Do not fear! Allah's promise is true. He will save you. and you will be victorious."

"They went forth and reached the Red Sea. Then Allah informed Nabi Musa ﷺ by revelation: "Strike your staff upon the sea so that the water can split open, and a road can appear through it."

Nabi Musa ﷺ did as he was ordered and immediately the water split and pulled up on two sides, standing like two mountains. In between the two sides a road opened up. At his command the whole of Bani Israel took this road and crossed over to the other side.

When Fir'own arrived there, saw this, and told his soldiers: "This is my miracle that you should catch Bani Israel."

The whole army with Fir'own proceeded forward and took the same road through the sea. But after Bani Israel had reached the other side safely, the water returned to its original form on the order of Allah. Thus Fir'own and his whole army who were still half way across were drowned on the Red Sea.

When Fir'own was drowning and he saw the Angels of Allah, bringing punishment, he called out: " I believe in that being a which Bani Israel believes and I am a Muslim, submitting unto Him."

He accepted Islam at last. But in actual fact it was not true *Imãn*; but like his previous deceitful declarations it was merely uttered to acquire salvation, Allah answered him thus: "Ah now! But a little while before you were in rebellion and did mischief." (10:91)

In other words Allah declared: "You are not of the Muslimeen, but of he *Mufsideen* (evil-doors).

What actually happened was that on seeing the punishment of Allah in front of him Fir'own called out in this way in an involuntary manner, which was not out of choice. It was not to acquire *Imãn* and *Yaqeen*. It was in answer to Nabi Musa (*Alaihis Salãm*)'s prophecy:

> "So they will not believe until they see the grevious penalty."
>
> Allah said: "Accepted O Musa and Haroon is your prayer." (10:85)

Allah further declares:

> "This day we shall save you in your body that you may be a sign to those who come after you. (10:92)

Note: In the Egyptian Museum in Cairo there is a corpse preserved up till today. It seems that having been drowned in the sea, the fish had eaten his nose off. It is said this corpse is the corps of the Fir'own of the time of Nabi Musa ﷺ, called Merneptah. And Allah knows best.

The Qur'ãn has told the story of Bani Israel's departure from Egypt and Fir'own's drowning in very concise terms as well as how Bani Israel was saved. All these were given in broad out lines and has mentioned the lessons in considerable detail. He says:

"And we sent an inspiration to Musa: Travel by night with my servants and strike a dry path for them through the sea without fear of being overtaken (by Fir'own) and without (any other) fear.

Then Fir'own pursued them with his forces but the waters completely overwhelmed them and covered them up.

Fir'own lad his people astray instead of leading them aright." (20:77—79)

A Great Miracle

The Holy Qur'ãn clearly states that the drowning of Fir'own and the departure of Nabi Musa ﷺ and the Israelites through the Red Sea was a great miracle which was granted to Nabi Musa ﷺ as a support for him. It was such a miracle which defeated all the worldly and material forces of evil and liberated an oppressed and persecuted people. "And Allah has power over all things."

Says Allah in the Qur'ãn: "We delivered Musa ﷺ and all who were with him.

But we drowned the others

Verily in this is a sign, But most of them do not believe.

And verily your Lord is He, the Exalted in Might, Most Merciful." (26:67—69)

Fir'own and the Day of Qiyamat

The battle between Nabi Musa ﷺ and Fir'own, between truth and false hood is one of the greatest battles ever. On the one side there was arrogance and pride, tyranny and

injustice, brute strength and the humilration of selfishness and disgrace and on the other side was an oppressed people, worship of Allah, patience and the victory of the steadfastness and the strange success of the poor ones.

For this reason after the defeat of Fir'own in this world, Allah has drawn attention to the valuable lessons in this and has indicated that for such people in the here after there will be a grave punishment.

"In front of the fire will they be brought morning and evening (and the sentence will be)

On the day of judgement will be established:

> "Cast the people of Fir'own into the severest penalty." (60:45—46)

NABI MUSA عليه السلام AND BANI ISRAEL AFTER CROSSING THE RED SEA

Their First Demand

After the Israelites had crossed the Red Sea, they took the road through the barren desert in the direction of Sinai. There they saw the inhabitants worshipping idols in temples. Seeing this they came to Nabi Musa عليه السلام and demanded: "O Musa عليه السلام make for us also such gods that we may worship them"

When Musa عليه السلام heard this polytheistic request, he became very angry and scolded them in harsh terms: "O you wretched ones;! You want to discard the worship of the one true God and go towards worshipping idols! Did you forget all the favours Allah had just shown you after seeing them with your own eyes?"

Allah's Favours on Bani Israel

Bani Israel were now in the Valley of Sinai where it was very hot.. from where they were to far off there was no greenery and no water. Bani Israel requested water and Musa prayed to Allah. Revelation came to him to strike his staff against the earth.

Nabi Musa did as he was ordered and immediately twelve fountains opened up so that each tribe of Bani Israel had their own watering place.

Manna and Salwa

Now after having found water Bani Israel felt hunger and once again Nabi Musa prayed for food. Once again his *Du'a* was answered: It so happened that when morning broke, Bani Israel saw that on the earth and the trees something like dew was descending from the sky. When they ate it, it tasted like sweet meats. This was called 'Manna.'

Then during the day a strong wind blew and then swarms of birds descended. All they had to do was catch the birds and slaughter them and eat. This was the Salwa.

The Shade of Clouds

Then they complained of the great heat of the sun and not finding the shade of trees or houses. Again Nabi Musa prayed to Allah and the *Du'a* was answered. Clouds came along and granted shade to them in the desert. Wherever they want the clouds and shade followed them.

The Ingratitude of Bani Israel

How could Bani Israel be adequately grateful for all the favours of Allah. One day they said: "O Musa, every day we eat the one type of food of which we are now tired."

We do not need this "*Manna wa Salwa.*" Pray to your Lord to grant us of what the earth produces, cabbage cucumbers, daal, garlic and onions, so that we may eat thereof.

Musa ﷺ answered: "Do you exchange good things for things not so good. Go and settle in a town. Surely there you will find all those things. (2:61)

Aetikaaf on Mount Toor

Allah had promised that after Bani Israel had been saved from slavery, He will grant him the *Shariat*. Now Bani Israel had reached Mount Toor. and Nabi Musa ﷺ went up the mountain to spend time in Allah's worship while he performed *Aetikaaf.*

"And we appointed for Musa ﷺ thirty nights and completed (the period) with ten (more). Thus was completed the term of communion with his Lord forty nights (7:142)

When Nabi Musa ﷺ went up the mountain to spend forty days:

> "And Musa ﷺ had charged his brother Haroon ﷺ (before we went up) 'Act for me against my people. Do right and follow not the way of those who do mischief."

The Manifestation of Allah

When the forty days were completed, Allah honoured Nabi Musa ﷺ by holding conversation with him. Musa ﷺ said:

> "O Lord, Show yourself to me, that I may look upon you."

Allah said: "By no means can you see Me.

But look upon the mount: If it abide in its place then shall you see Me."

When his Lord manifested His glory on the mount, He made it as dust and Musa ﷺ fell into a swoon when he recovered his senses he said:

> "Glory be to you! To you I turn in repentance and I am the first to believe." (7:143)

The Revelation of the Torah

After this secret conversation Allah revealed the Torah to him.

> "And we ordained laws for him in the tablets in all matters, both commanding and explaining all things (and said) take and hold these with firmness and enjoin your people to hold fast; by the best in the precepts." (7:145)

And so was the Torah revealed and together with it, it was also declared that : Our Law is this that if a people after guidance had reached them and clear proof and arguments and in spite thereof, they refuse to use their minds and remain on their wrong ways and stick to the ways of their fore fathers and customs, insisting thereupon, We will leave them on their astray path and there will be for them no portion of our Message of truth because through their disobedience they had moved from themselves the capability of accepting the truth."

The Worship of the Cow

During this time a strange incident happened. Taking advantage of Nabi Musa ﷺ absence from Bani Israel while

he was in *Aetikaaf* on the mountain, a certain by the name of Saamiry did some mischief.

(According to Maulana Abul Kalam Azad this man was not of Bani Israel, but a member of the people of Sumeria)

Out worldly he was a Muslim. He told Bani Israel: "If you can hand me the jewellery which was borrowed from the Egyptians and which you could no hand back to them before leaving Egypt, then I will show you something for your benefit."

Bani Israel handed all the jewellery to him. He melted the jewellery and made a form of cow out of it. Then from his own side he added a handful of sand into it and through this some signs of life appeared in it and it started to utter a sound. Then he told Bani Israel: "Musa ﷺ has made mistake. This is your God."

At his indication Bani Israel started worshipping the cow.

Allah informed Musa ﷺ of this happening. Allah asked him:

> "O Musa ﷺ, Why did you leave your people and hasten here?"

Musa ﷺ replied:

> "I hurried towards you, Lord, to acquire guidance for my people."

Then Allah informed him that the people for whose guidance he did so much and on behalf of whom he is so anxious, have been led astray. Hearing this, Musa ﷺ was greatly saddened and returned to his people with anger and sorrow. Facing them he said: "What is this you have done?

Did I stay away from you so long that you had to get involved in this calamity?"

At the time he was very angry, and in his anger the Torah tablets fell from his hands.

The Israelites replied: This is not our fault. It is the burden of the jewellery of the Egyptians which we carried along with us. That is what Saamiry requested from us out of which he made this form and misled us.

'*Shirk*' associating anything unto Allah is such a crime, which cannot be tolerated. Musa عليه السلام was very hot tempered. He grabbed his brother Haroon by the neck and stretched his hand towards his beard to hold him by it.

Haroon عليه السلام exclaimed: "O brother, it is not my fault. I have tired my utmost to prohibit them, but they would not heed. They said that for as long as Musa عليه السلام does not return, we won't listen to you."

In fact, finding me weak, they even planned to kill me. When I saw this, I thought that if I should fight against them, and a battle should ensue between the true believers and them, then the accusation could be laid at my door, that I have caused a division among Bani Israel. Therefore I preferred silence as I awaited your return. Beloved brother, do not hold me by the head or by my beard so that others do not find a chance to laugh at us."

Hearing this explanation from Haroon عليه السلام, Nabi Musa (*Alaihis Salãm*)'s anger subsided, and he turned in the direction of Saamiry:

> "Saamiry, what is this nonsense you have made?"

He replied:

> "I have seen something which these Israelites
> did not see.

(At the time of the drowning of Fir'own), I saw Jibreal on a horse between the forces of Fir'own and the Israelites. I have noticed that in the dust under the hoofs of the horse there were signs of life and that from the dry green earth fire came forth. So I took, handful of dust from under the hoofs of the horse. This I threw into the statue of the cow and signs of life was created in it and a voice came forth from it."

Nabi Musa ﷺ said:

> "Now for you in this world this will be your punishment: you will roam around in the world like a mad man. When any person comes near to you, you will flee from him and say: "Don't touch me!" This will be your punishment in this world and on the Day of *Qiyamat* there will be a special punishment. that will surely be fulfilled in your case."

O Saamiry, the cow which you have made into an idols, we shall cast it into the fire to be burnt to dust, so it become known to the foolish ones has no power or no strength and cannot even do any harm or benefit to anyone, neither can it save itself from destruction.

The Pardon of Bani Israel

After Nabi Musa (*Alaihis Salãm*)'s anger had subsided, he picked up the tablets of the Torah and returned to Allah asking what deed would be the pardon of the Israelites who had been guilty of this irreligious deed which actually constituted apostly. The answer came that those guilty of the evil must now kill themselves.

There is a report in Sahih Nisai Shareef that Nabi Musa ﷺ told Bani Israel that there is only one way of repenting

for their evil deed, viz that those guilty of it should kill themselves in this way that the one nearest in blood relationship should do the killing, that is the father should kill the son and the son should kill the father and brother should kill brother. In the end Bani Israel was forced to accept this punishment as a deed of repentance and pardon. Many of Bani Israel were killed in this manner.

Finally when many had been killed Nabi Musa ﷺ prayed to Allah: "O Allah! Now have mercy on them and forgive for them their fault."

Allah accepted the *Du'a* and announced: "We have pardoned both the killer and the killed one, as well as the living one who was guilty. Now tell them that in future they should not even go near to any form of '*Shirk*' ".

The Appointment of Seventy Chiefs

After the Israelites had their crime pardoned Nabi Musa ﷺ told them: "These tablets which are with me is Allah's Book which He revealed to me for your guidance and for your worldly as well as religions life and its success. It is the Torah. You are required to believe in it and to follow its instructions.

They asked him: "O Musa , how do we know, for sure, that it is Allah's Book?

We will not merely believe because you say so. We will believe when we shall see Allah with our own eyes and He tells as that this Torah is His Book."

Nabi Musa ﷺ explained to them that is a foolish question and request. "You will not be able to see Him."

However their demand was insisted upon. Nabi Musa ﷺ thought about it and then said to them: "This is impossible

that you in your hundreds of thousands should come with me to Horeb on Mount Toor, to confirm Allah's Book.

I think it is best that you choose some chiefs from among you to go with me. And when they come back after confirmation, then you must also accept. And moreover, because of you worship of the cow you committed a big sin, it now seems advisable that you should also exhibit your sorrow and regret and make a promise to continue good works in future."

They agreed with this proposal and Nabi Musa ﷺ chose seventy chiefs and took them with him to mount Toor. On the mountain a white cloud enveloped Nabi Musa ﷺ and he began to talk to Allah: He said:

> "O Allah you are fully aware of the condition of Bani Israel. I have chosen seventy men from among them and brought them to you how nice would it not be if they could listen to my conversation with you so that they can return to their people and confirm."

Allah accepted Musa (*Alaihis Salãm*)'s plea and they all were entered into the 'curtain of light' and they listened to the conversation between Musa ﷺ and Allah.

The Obstinacy of the Chiefs and Allah's Punishment

When the curtain of light was removed, and Nabi Musa ﷺ and the chiefs came face to face, the chiefs repeated their original demand, that they would not believe in the Torah unless they see Allah with out any curtain in between. Due to this foolish insistence and obstinacy Allah's wrath came in the form of a frightening lightning and thunder and an earthquake came along and burnt them all to ashes.

When Nabi Musa saw this he prayed:

> "O Allah, these foolish ones have surely been guilty of foolishness. Will you them destroy as all for it?
>
> O Allah through your Mercy, forgive them."

Allah heard Musa (*Alaihis Salãm*)'s *Du'a* and brought them all back to life."

The Qur'ãn says:

> "And remember you said: O Musa, we shall never believe in you, until we see Allah manifestly, But you were dazed with thunder and lightning even as you looked on.
>
> Then we raised you up after your death:
>
> You had the chance to be grateful." (2:55)

Bani Israel's Second Refusal and Mount Toor

When the seventy chiefs after being brought back to life returned to their people, they told the others that whatever Nabi Musa had told them was true and that he was sent by Allah.

It would have been natural for them that they should be grateful to Allah and show obedience to Him, but it so happened that soon thereafter they again showed their obstinacy and in spite of the confirmation by the seventy chiefs, they again refused to accept the Torah, bringing all kinds of excuses and objections.

When Nabi Musa saw this, he again complained to Allah of their attitude. And Allah revealed to Nabi Musa :

> "With regard to these disobedient ones, I give you one more miraculous sign: viz On that same mountain on which I conversed with you and where your seventy chiefs saw what they saw, I shall command that same mountain to move from its place and to become suspended over Bani Israel like a roof and to declare silently that Musa is the true Messenger of Allah and that the Torah is Allah's true Book and if these two facts were not true you would not see this event happening.

As soon as Allah's decision was made Mt Toor moved from its place and became like a roof canopy over Bani Israel saying: "O Bani Israel, if there is reason and understanding in you and the ability to differentiate between truth and false hood, then listen with an ear of truth, I am a special sign from Allah to indicate to you and to bear witness that Musa has on various occasions had conversations with Allah on my back and the Torah as a Book of guidance was also received by him on my back.

O you evil ones of rebellion and disobedience; This posture of mine which surprises you, is to bear witness that when the softness of a person's heart changes to hardness he can became as hard as a piece of stone and even harder and as such no guidance can enter it. I am a collection of stones but in front of Allah's order I submit completely but you in your selfishness and arrogance are not even prepared to change your 'no' for a "yes."

Qur'ãn states:

> "Hence forth were your hearts hardened like a rock and even more worse in hardness." (2:74)

The result was that Bani Israel saw this and felt fear in them and they declared openly to follow the Torah and declared before Nabi Musa ﷺ that they accept it. Then Allah said to them: "Whatever we have given you, hold onto it fast and follow its instructions that you may become pious and god fearing."

It is a pity that in spite of this solemn declaration that Bani Israel could not live up to their covenant for very long. It was not much later when they again started acting contrary to their promises: The Qur'ān puts it thus:

> "And remember we took your covenant and we raised above you (the towering height of) Mt. Sinai saying. Hold firmly to what we have given you. And bring ever to remembrance what is there in perhaps you may fear Allah. (2:3)
>
> But you turned back there after.
>
> Had it not been for the Grace and Mercy of Allah to you, You had surely been among the lost.'
>
> (2:63—64)

Further:

> "And when we shook the mount over them, as if it had been a canopy and they thought it was going to fall on them (we said): Hold firmly to what we have given you. And bring ever to remembrance what is therein perchance you may fear Allah." (7:171)

The Promise of the Holy Land

Note: The Holy Land is that area which was first known as Canaan and later became known as Palestine.

The area in which Bani Israel was quite near to Palestine and it was Allah's promise to Ibraheem, Ishaq and Ya'qoob that He would bring their children back to become owners of the land where they will flourish. Therefore Allah told Nabi Musa to order the Israelites to enter the Holy Land and to remove from there the unjust tyrannical rulers and to introduce a life of peace and justice. Allah promised that He would grant them victory and their unjust enemies would be vanquished.

Before Nabi Musa ordered them to enter the land, he chose twelve men to investigate the conditions in the land. Then entered the city of Areeha (Jericho) and investigated conditions thoroughly. On their return they informed Nabi Musa that the people were strong and well-built with powerful forms.

Nabi Musa told them not to disclose these facts to the people because, having been in virtual slavery for a long time, they had lost courage and bravery and instead had been filled with cowardice, humiliation and lack of courage. These men were however part of the nation and went to tell their people the whole story of the enemy's strength, exaggerating it even more. Only two of the men i.e. Yusha bin Noon and Kaalib bin Yafna did not tell their people. They refrained from any such actions which would let their people lose courage.

Then Nabi Musa told the Israelites to enter the Holy Land, Jericho, fight the enemy and take possession of the land as the Qur'ãn states: "Remember Musa said to his people: O My people, call in remembrance the favour of Allah unto you when he produced prophets among you. Made you Kings and gave you what He had not given to any among the Peoples.

O My people enter the Holy Land which Allah had assigned unto you and turn not back ignominiously for then, you will be overthrown to your own ruin. (5:22—23)

Bani Israel's Disobedience

Bani Israel replied: "O Musa ﷺ, there are some very strong people living there. We shall not enter that town until they depart from it. It is a pity that these unfortunate beings did not think that how were those strong men going to depart from the city unless they should chase them out."

When Yusha and Kaalib saw this, they encouraged their sections of the nation and told them it was no difficult feat for them to enter through the city gates. "They were to attack and Allah would make them victorious.

> "But among their god fearing men were two on whom Allah had bestowed His Grace;
>
> They said: Assault them at the gate
>
> when once you are in, victory will be yours."
>
> (5:25)
>
> But on Allah put your trust
>
> If you have faith."

However these words of inspiration had no effect on Bani Israel. They still insisted in their refusal to fight. When Musa ﷺ further encouraged them, they said:

> "O Musa while they remain there never shall we be able to enter it to the end of time.
>
> Go you and your Lord and fight you two while we sit here and watch." (5:24)

When Nabi Musa ﷺ heard this uncouth reply he was very distressed and very sad and turned to Allah in prayer: "O Lord I only have power over myself and Haroon ﷺ, my brother. So separate us from this folk." (5:26)

Allah replied:

> "Be not sad: Their disobedience is no burden upon you therefore will the land be out of their reach for forty years. In distruction will they wander through the land.
>
> So be not sad over these rebellious people."
>
> (5:29)

During that period Nabi Musa ﷺ and Haroon ﷺ also had to stay with them in that desert plain. They too were not allowed to enter the Holy Land because it was necessary for the guidance of Bani Israel that their Prophet and Messenger should be among them.

The Demise of Hazrat Haroon ﷺ

While Bani Israel was wandering in the desert like lost people, and they passed near to a mountain called 'Hoor' he received news of his impending death. Both he and Moosa ﷺ climbed onto Mount Hoor where for a couple of days they remained busy in '*Ibadat*' there Nabi Haroon ﷺ passed away and Nabi Musa ﷺ took charge of his burial and funeral. When returned from there he informed Bani Israel of the death of Nabi Haroon ﷺ.

The Demise of Nabi Musa ﷺ

It is reported by Abu Hurayrah ؓ that when Musa (*Alaihis Salãm*)'s death approached, one angel of death

appeared before him. After some conversation, Nabi Musa عليه السلام told Allah: "If after the longest life-span the end result will eventually be death, why shall death not come over me now? O Allah in my last moments, make it happen near the Holy Land."

According to the *Du'a* of Nabi Musa عليه السلام, his grave is found in the settlement of Jericho called '*Katheeb' Ahmar*' the Red hill. Which is also mentioned in one *Hadith*. It should be noted that in the plain of Teeh, the nearest valley of the holy land is the town of Jericho. It is as if we may say his last *Du'a* was also accepted.

Other Incidents During the Prophethood of Nabi Musa عليه السلام

Once it so happened that a murder took place among the Israelites, but there was no knowledge as to who the murderer was various accusation were made. Nabi Musa عليه السلام turned to Allah in his search for the murderer and he was ordered to kill a cow. Then he had to take a piece of the cow and touch the murdered man with it. This would cause the dead man to be brought back to life and he would say who the murder was.

When he told Bani Israel about the cow, they once again showed their absurd reasoning and argumentation nature. First they asked him:

> "O Musa عليه السلام are you playing the fool with us?"
>
> "And if that is really Allah's command, what colour of cow should it be?"

They wanted some more details. After Nabi had answered all their questions regarding the cow, then only were they prepared to carry out the order the murdered man became alive and he told the whole story of his murder so that even

the murderer had to confess to it and the matter was properly settled. But in the incident showed the trouble-some and hard-hearted nature of the Jews.

Nabi Musa ﷺ *and Qaroon*

There was a very rich man among the Israelites who was known by the name of Qaroon. His treasures consisted of many kinds of jewellery and gold. A group of strong powerful men was needed to pick up the keys which led to his treasure store-houses.

Because of his richness he had become quite arrogant and so affected was he by his affluence that he began to look down upon his other relations, and other members of society who were less fortunate than him.

Nabi Musa ﷺ and his people once advised him that Allah had endowed him with considerable wealth and riches with honour and dignity, there for he should at all times be grateful and express thanks and also that he should give the rights of his riches by giving alms and charity to the needy. They advised him that it was an act of ingratitude to forget Allah and to go against His orders and it is not the correct thing to look upon the weaker and power ones as being degraded and despicable. The selfishness and egoism in Qaroon did not like this advice and in a haughty manner replied: "This has been given to me because of a certain knowledge which I have."

> "I cannot accept your advice and destroy my riches." (29:78)

Nabi Musa ﷺ continued to convey the message and to show Qaroon the way. When Qaroon saw that Nabi Musa ﷺ did not desist from following him, he one day came out in all

splendour to exhibit his wealth and riches. At that time Nabi Musa was preaching to Bani Israel, conveying Allah's message to them, as Qaroon passed by in all splendour, exhibiting his treasures. The intention was to show that although Nabi Musa had the ear of the people, he also had quite a following among them by virtue of his wealth. His aim was to defeat Musa by making use of his gold and jewels.

When Bani Israel saw his shine and splendour, through human weakness this idea settled in their hearts: "Alas! If only these riches and wealth and splendour would came to us too!"

However the men of understanding among Bani Israel quickly interfered and responded: "Behold! Don't go after these worldly adornments and do not allow yourself to be caught in this worldly greed. Soon you will see the evil results of this wealth and riches."

In the end after Qaroon had made a good display of his arrogance and pride and after having emphasised his degrading and humiliation of the Muslims from Bani Israel, Allah's wrath was stirred into action and his law of retribution came into force. Allah passed a decree against Qaroon and all his wealth. "Then we caused the earth to swallow up him and his house and he had not the least party to help him against Allah.

Nor could he defend himself." (28:81)

Bani Israel saw all this. His arrogance did not remain nor his goods. The earth swallowed everything up and so a lessons was produced for others the Qur'ãn has told this story in broad terms and in more detail.

When did Qaroon's Incident Take Place?

The *Ulama* of *Tafseer* are divided over the issue of when this incident took place i.e., in Egypt before the drowning of

Fir'own or while they were wandering in the wilderness. The Qur'ãn mentions the story after the events of Fir'own's drowning. Therefore in our opinion it happened while Bani Israel was wandering around in the desert.

Nabi Musa عليه السلام *and Hazrat Khidr* عليه السلام

Of the important incidents in the life of Nabi Musa عليه السلام is the meeting he had with a man of the inner sciences, from whom he learned some secret matters pertaining to the world of causes (*Takweeniyaat*). The meeting between him and this person is told in *Surah Kahf* and in Bukhari Shareef there are some more details.

In Bukhari it is reportd by Saeed bin Jubair رضي الله عنه that he inquired from Abdullah bin Abbaas رضي الله عنه: "Nowf Bukkaali says that the Musa عليه السلام who is mentioned with Khidr is not the Musa عليه السلام of Bani Israel. It is another Musa عليه السلام."

Sayeduna Abdullah bin Abbaas رضي الله عنه replied: "The enemy of Allah is telling a lie. Ubay bin Kaab reported to me that he heard Rasulallah ﷺ say: "One day Nabi Musa عليه السلام was addressing Bani Israel when a certain man asked him: "who in this age is the best scholar with most knowledge?"

Nabi Musa عليه السلام replied:

"I. Allah has given me most knowledge."

Allah was not pleased with this answer and as a result of the Nabi Musa عليه السلام was reprimanded: "For you it would have been filling to have said rather. Allah knows best."

Then it was revealed to him: Go to where the two seas are meeting. There you will find one of my servants who in some matters have more knowledge than you.

Nabi Musa ﷺ inquired: "How is the route to that servant of yours?

Allah replied:

"Take a fish in your food box and where the fish will disappear, there you will find him."

Nabi Musa ﷺ took his tiffin box and placed a fish in it, and together with his successor Yusha bin Noon he took the road towards the place where the two seas meet, to meet the pious person. After traveling for some distance they slept on a big rock. There the fish became alive and escaped from the box and took its way into the sea. It began swimming in the water and where it swam the water turned to ice like a foot-path in the water.

Yusha saw all this as he woke up from sleep before Nabi Musa ﷺ did, but when Nabi Musa ﷺ woke up he forgot to relate the story to him. They resumed their journey further, traveling for another day and a night. The next day Nabi Musa ﷺ said to him: "Now tiredness has overtaken me. Bring the fish that we may drive off the hunger."

[Rasulallah ﷺ said that for Musa ﷺ to travel to their set destination they felt no weariness, but for traveling beyond that they felt the tiredness].

Then Yusha said to Nabi Musa ﷺ: "When we were sleeping on the big rock, the fish became alive in a wonderful way and took its way into the sea and as it swan in the sea it formed a path through the water. I have forgotten to relate this story to you. that is as a result of *Shaitan*'s doing."

Musa ﷺ replied:

"That spot is the place we were searching for."

They immediately retraced their steps as they took the road back.

Finally they reached the rock and there they found a man dressed in fine clothing, sitting there. Nabi Musa greeted him: He answered:

> "Where is this *Salaam* coming from in this land?"

This man was Sayeduna Khidr.

Nabi Musa said to him: "I have come to you to learn some of that knowledge which Allah had taught you.

Khidr replied: "If you stay with me, you will not be able to have patience to bear all those things. Allah has taught me such secrets of creation which He did not teach you and of *Shariah* knowledge He has given you what He did not give me.

Nabi Musa said: "*Insha'allah* you will find me patient and for bearing."

And I will not disobey you in the least.

Khidr replied:

> "If you are to accompany me it will be on this condition that whatever your eyes will see, you will not question me about. I will in my own time explain things to you."

Nabi Musa agreed to the condition and the two of them proceeded in a certain direction Finally they reached the coast of the sea and saw a boat. There Khidr asked the sailers about crossing over and the price. The sailors knew him and they refused to accept any payment. They took both

Musa ﷺ and Khidr aboard without payment. Before the journey had ended Khidr took out one of the planks in the front of the boat. Nabi Musa ﷺ could not tolerate this. He exclaimed: "The sailors had done us a favour by loading us on the boat without payment and now you pay them back by making a hole in the boat. This means the boat and sailors will all be drowned and perish. This is most unsuitable.

Khidr ﷺ replied:

> "I told you before the time you will not be able to have patience with me. And that has happened."

Nabi Musa ﷺ said:

> "I have completely forgotten about that. So do not blame me for not having remembered.

[Rasulallah ﷺ said that this first question by Musa ﷺ was truly as a result of having forgotten.]

Then as they sailed, a bird came along at the side of the boat and placed its beak into the water, taking a drop of water. Khidr saw this and said:

> "This is an indication of your and mine knowledge in comparison with Allah's knowledge. Our knowledge is like that drop of water.

The boat reached the shore and the two of them disembarked. They walked along the shore until they reached an open plain where some children were playing. Khidr took one of the children did killed him. Once again Nabi Musa ﷺ could not bear it and he said: "You have taken the life of an innocent child without any justification. This is very bad.

Khidr ﷺ replied: "Did I not tell you from before that you will not be able to have patience with me?

[Rasulallah ﷺ says that because this deed was more serious than the first one Nabi Musa ﷺ could not bear it].

Musa ﷺ said: "This time once more forgive me for questioning. If after this I again fail to have patience there will be no excuse for me, then you and I must part.

Once again they went along, until they came to a village where the people were in a good position to accept them as guests. However in spite of them asking to be taken as guests, they refused. They left and on the one side of the village came upon a house where they found a wall in such a condition that it was about to fall down, Khidr used his hands and straightened the wall preventing it from falling down. Nabi Musa ﷺ once again rebuked him: "We entered this village as travellers but the inhabitants refused to have us as guests and refused us to stay with them. Now you repaired the wall for one of their people without any payment. If you had to do it why could you not have agreed with them on a price so that we could use the price for our food and drink to drive of hunger and thirst."

Khidr ﷺ replied:

"Now is the time for you and me to part."

Then he began to explain to Musa ﷺ the three events, saying those three deeds were orders from Allah.

Important things about Khidr ﷺ

There are few things note worthy about Hazrat Khidr ﷺ.

(1) Is Khidr a name or is it a nickname? Is he a pious person or a *Nabi* or *Rasul*?

(i) Has he got everlasting life or has he died already? (ii) Where is the *Majma-ul-Bahrain*, the junction of the two seas? (iii) What is the rank of Hazrat Khidr ﷺ ?

In the Qur'ãn, neither is his name mentioned nor his nickname. He is only mentioned as "One of our servants." In Sahih Bukhari and Muslim he is mentioned, but even from there too could not be ascertained if Khidr is a name or a nickname, but this is not really necessary.

(2) The most preferred verdict is that he was a Nabi. The manner in which the Qur'ãn mentions him is a manner reserved for Prophets. The rank of sainthood (*Wilayat*) is beneath that of Prophets

(3) It is the view of the research scholars of Islam (*Muhaqqiqeen*) that Khidr ﷺ had already passed away because for all those in this world death is necessary.

The Qur'ãn says:

> "O Muhammad we granted not to any man before you permanent life: If you should die will they live permanently?" (21:34)

(4) As for the *Majma-ul-Bahrain* the juncture of the two seas. Our Ustad Maulana Sayed Anwar Shah kashmiri's view was that this is the spot that today is called *'Aqaba'*

(5) As for the rank of Hazrat Khidr ﷺ, the Qur'ãn stated about Khidr (*Alaihis Salãm*'s knowledge, "that we have taught him knowledge form our own selves." And a *Surah Kahf* we have Khidr (*Alaihis Salãm*)'s statement "that he did not do any of those things of his own self," but through Allah's command.

(Al-Kahf: 82)

From those sentences we deduce that Allah had granted him some inner secrets of the workings in the creation which is something he only grants to special servants of His, such secrets that if these become known to all others, the laws and regulations of this whole world would suffer. For this reason those matters should remain hidden to the ordinary man.

As for as the rank of Hazrat Musa ﷺ is concerned, then because of being a Prophet and Messenger of Allah he is of higher rank than Khidr by virtue of being an eminent messenger of Allah and a bringer of a *Shariat* and also being a bringer of a Revealed Bood.Thus Khidr by virtues of being a knower of special *Takweeni* knowledge cannot surpass Musa ﷺ in rank.

Trouble Caused to Hazrat Musa ﷺ by Bani Israel

From the foregoing incidents it is quite clear that Bani Israel caused Hazrat Musa ﷺ much trouble, annoyance and distress, both in word and in deed. It was to such an extent that they did not even desist from false accusations and defamation. In the Qur'ãn Bani Israel is blamed for the trouble and distress caused to Nabi Musa ﷺ apart from the incidents that we have mentioned here. In *Surah Ahzab* and *Surah Saf* mention is made of their trouble some nature.

> "O you who believe be not like those who vexed and insulted Musa ﷺ but Allah cleared him of (the calumnies) they had uttered. And he was honourable in Allah's sight." (*Ahzab* : 69)

Further:

> "And remember, Musa ﷺ said to his people: O my people why do you vex and insult me,

though you know that I am the apostle of Allah (sent) to you." (*Saf*: 5)

In this respect there is the question as to what trouble is referred to here. Does this refer to the rebellious and disobedient of Bani Israel or is there a reference to a specific incident? The correct answer to this question is that as the Qur'ãn gave a broad outline account, in concise form, it seems appropriate that we too should not present it as being connected to any specific incident or happening, and to be contented with the concise account.

The Sabbath Day

Hazrat Ibraheem ﷺ fixed one of the seven days of the week as a special day for the worship of Allah. He made it the Friday. During the time of Nabi Musa ﷺ, Bani Israel insisted strongly that on stead of friday, saturday should be that day. As a result of this demand from them Allah revealed to Nabi Musa ﷺ that their request has been granted and saturday has replaced friday. Qur'ãn says: "And we told Bani Israel: Transgress not in the matter of the Sabbath And we fork from them a Solemn covenant." (4:154)

Other Matters Concerning Prophethood of Nabi Musa (Alaihis Salãm)'s Time

According to the head of the Egyptian Antiquities and historical and archaeological research scholar Ahmad Yusuf Effendi, when Nabi Yusuf ﷺ entered Egypt it was during the 17th dynasty of the Pharaohs and the Fir'own of that time was someone called Ababi I and the Fir'own who caused Bani Israel so much hardships could be Rameses II. He belonged to the 21st dynasty. Nabi Musa ﷺ was born during his rule and was cared for in his palace. Rameses II had this fear that

Bani Israel who had by then grown to hundreds of thousands, may perhaps become inclined to rebellion. For this reason he started causing them injury and calamities. Rameses II in his old age made his son, Merneftah to share the rule of Egypt with him, so it seems possible that Merneftah was the Fir'own who was drowned. Some sort of confirmation for this opinions is found in the fact that according to Egyptian custom there is not a separate grave for Merneftah, but he was buried among the pharaohs of the 18th dynasty.

In the Egyptian Maseum there is up to today a corpse of a Pharoah and according to Muhammad Ahmad Abody in his book '*Dawat-ur-Rasulullah*, the front part of the nose of this corpse is missing. It is possible that the fish of the Red Sea might have eaten it and thereafter in response to Allah's command the corpse was thrown out onto the shore where it was washed up.

> "So that you may be a sign for those coming afterwards up to today the mummy (corpse) of Fir'own is saying to spectators: "Look at me with eyes that take a lesson." (10:92)

The Judgement of Maarile Bucaile

The drowning of Fir'own is a story which has been a subject discussed by various scholars, old and new, even now too. Many books have been written, on the subject and are still being written, but almost all of them have dealt with the historical and geographical aspects and in this regard the French writer Maurice Bucaille in his book "*The Bible, the Qur'ãn and Science*" has dealt with this subject in considerable detail. Some of them are as follows:

1) Nabi Musa ﷺ was born during the rule of Rameses II and was also reared and cared for in his palace.

2) Rameses II passed away during the period when Nabi Musa ﷺ was settled in Madyan.

3) After the death of Rameses II passed away he was succeeded by his son Marneftah and he was drowned in the Red Sea about 1200 BC. The spot where Bani Israel crossed over the Red Sea cannot be fixed with any certainty.

4) The corpses of both Rameses II and Marneftah are preserved in the Egyptian Museum in Cairo.

Rational Views with Regard to the Splitting of the Sea

Then are people who in all issues of *Deen* wish to interpret everything according to materialistic concepts and as such go so far as to denie and reject all miracles which were given to them by Allah in support of their claims to Prophet hood. They are not prepared to concede that any action in this world can be contrary to the World's law of cause and affect. For this reason they take the incident of Nabi Musa (*Alaihis Salãm*)'s time, viz the splitting open of the Red Sea and offer various rational explanations for this event.

For example they state as one of their famous explanations for the splitting up of the Red Sea, that it was actually a case of low tide and that it was part of the flax and reflux of the ocean.

However in this explanation they seem to have forgotten that the Bani Israel who crossed over were hundreds of thousands in number according to the Torah. Even if we take that to be an exaggeration then at least there must have been thousands of them. Together with these numbers, were their luggage and possessions and also their

animals and other possessions. Then after that came Fir'own's large army in pursuit of the Israelites. Which drown.

The Qur'ãn states:

> "So the sea divided and each separate part became like the huge firm mass of a mountain."
>
> (26:64)

It is clear that the above situation remained for such a period until Bani Israel crossed from the one side to the other shore in safety and waited until Fir'own and his army followed them until they were drowned.

The Qur'ãn states:

> "And we saved Musa ﷺ and all who were with him. And then we drowned the others. (26:66)
>
> "Verily in this is a Sign"

After this clear explanation it seems that to describe the splitting open of the sea as being a case of flex and reflux of the sea, is a case of denial of the truth.

Sihr (Sorcery) and Religion

1. *Sihr* (Sorcery, Magic) a reality or is it merely deceiving the eyes? With regard to this question it is the opinion of the *Ulama* of the *Ahl-e-Sunnat wa Jama'at* that '*Sihr*' (Sorcery) is a reality and can have harmful effects. Allah in His perfect wisdom has placed these harmful effects in it just as He has places such effect in poisonous substances. But it is not so that *Sihr* is independent of Allah's *Qudrat*, Godforbid! and that it is in itself the causer of those effects. Such a belief is *Kufr*!

2. The *Ulama* have said where in the execution of *Sihr* help is sought from the *Shaitan*s or evil souls or beings other than Allah and such beings are called upon to fulfil needs or where in the recitation of *Mantras* their names are mentioned for the purpose of subduing someone, then that act is an act of "*Shirk*" and the doer thereof becomes a *Kaafir*. However if a person uses other means than these and aims to cause others harm, then the perpetrator of such acts is guilty of a great sin-one of the Major sins.

DifferenceBetween a Miracle and Sorcery

The actual miracle of a *Nabi* or a *Rasul* is that teaching of such a *Nabi* which he shows for the guidance of those who are lost or had strayed from the path. This miracle are like a medical prescription and is unique law for the worldly and spiritual success. However it is part of human nature that it demands as a sign of the verification and confirmation of the truth of a claimant that he should show some such form of miraculous actions which the others are unable and incapable of emulating. For this reason it has been Allah's line of action that he always sent some such signs with His Prophets (*Alaihimus Salãm*) and Messengers and that when those Prophets (*Alaihimus Salãm*) exhibited those signs with their claim to Prophet hood, such signs which no worldly power could emulate or oppose, such sign were called Miracle or *Mau'jizaah*.

Similarly it has been Allah's line of action that the type of 'sign' which He gave any specific messenger, that 'sign' would be of a similar nature as those things or arts in which that people had some expertise or for which they had become known, and about which they know the intricate details and realities. In this way those people are able to recognise that

this sign of the Prophet ﷺ is something beyond the power and ability of a human being, and if they are not obstinate ones, they would involuntarily exclaim: "This is the act of Allah, the Supreme Being." So the Miracle or *Muajizah* is Allah's act directly which comes to establish the truth of a truthful Prophet and is not based upon laws and principles so that its art can be studied and learnt, and is not such that a *Nabi* will at all times be able to perform it and show it, but comes to be performed mostly when opponents demand and challenge it to be performed. Hence when such a challenge is made to the Prophet ﷺ, then from Allah's side comes the power and ability to perform and show it.

As for Magic or Sorcery, this is a dirty thing with its laws and principles which the sorceror or Magician can apply and practise at any time, even though the reasons for its execution are hidden from the sights of the ordinary man. Those who are acquainted with the dirty Magic are aware of it. Like other arts it is an arranged and compiled one, for which the Egyptians, Chinese and Hindus had become well known.

Then in practical terms which we can see and observe there is one other major difference between *Moujizah* and *Sihr*. As far as the sorceror or Magician is concerned, his life is generally one of causing harm to others, evil doings and as such people fear of him, As for the *Nabi*, his whole life is life of truth, sincerity, sympathy with mankind, fear of God and a life of cleanliness, while his character is unblemished. He does not make the Miracle a way of earning a livelihood but only forth with it to assist in proving his truth or when opponents challenge him to do so. In any case those enemies themselves admit his clean-living habits, although they doubt the truth of his claim to Prophet hood.

Further when there is a confrontation between *Sihr* and *Maujizah* it will always be *Maujizah* who will be victorious and never cans *Sihr* ever be victorious.

At the time of Nabi Musa عليه السلام, Egypt was almost looked upon as being the capital of the world as far as magic and Sorcery was concerned and the Egyptians had developed it to a fine art amongst themselves.

Life after Death

The Qur'ãn has explained life after death in this manner that after the life of this world will follow the life of the hereafter. after death a person will be brought back to life in the here after. This is the general rule. However sometimes for a special reason and for expedience a persons dies and is given life again in this world. In the lives of the Prophets the Qur'ãn itself bears testimony to this having happened.

In the life of Nabi Musa عليه السلام it so happened that seventy chiefs of Bani Israel were brought back to life. Because of their insulting insistence they were all killed and thereafter a special *Du'a* by Nabi Musa عليه السلام they were brought back to life. Similarly in the slaughter of the cow incident, the murdered person was once again brought back to life. In these cases Allah knows best what the expedience (special reason) was. We with our incomplete understanding can only say that the aim was that those who were affected by it should be thankful and not be guilty of similar acts in future and in future become true obedient servants. After having seen the clear evidence from the Qur'ãn there is no need to resorts to other interpretations.

The Abundance of Bounties

In spite of the rebellious nature and disobedience of Bani Israel, and from the manner in which the Qur'ãn time and again reminds them of Allah's favours on them, the question arises as to why Allah had chosen this nation for showering upon them His bounties. The answered may be this that in that era all the nations of the earth were deeply involved with '*Shirk*' and '*Kufr*', rebellion, disobedience, evil deeds and injusties that if Bani Israel were compared to the others, their evils were less. History provides the evidence that this nation, in spite of its general disobedience, was also responsible for a small group of them used to spread Allah's message of *Hidayat* to the world. In other words Bani Israel being a chosen folk was not because of their own purity or holiness but because through them an end was sought to evil and disobedience.

Musa ﷺ as a Messenger

In the Holy Qur'ãn and the *Hadith* the virtues of Nabi Musa ﷺ and the incidents of Bani Israel, we come to know the high position of Nabi Musa ﷺ and his high rank. Moreover if we look at the numerous problems and obstacles he faced in his interaction with Fir'own, the people of Fir'own and with Bani Israel, then we come to the conclusion that [(except in the case of Rasulallah ﷺ and Hazrat Ibrheem ﷺ] no other *Nabi* had to face such problems. Thus we say that the seal of the Prophets, Sayeduna Muhammad ﷺ and the Mujaddid of the Prophets Hazrat Ibraheem ﷺ and after them Nabi Musa ﷺ were the eminent Prophets of especially high rank above all others.

Is should also be remembered that according to Baukhary and Muslim Rasulallah ﷺ said:

"Do not consider me superior to Musa ﷺ because on the day of *Qiyamat*, out of fear people will fall down into unconsciousness. The first person to be revived from it will be its consciousness.

Then I will see Musa ﷺ standing holding onto the foot of the throne. I cannot then say whether he regained consciousness before me or whether because of his having fallen into a sworn on Mount Toor, he was today exempted from falling into unconsciousness."

Ibn Katheer states that this statement of Rasulallah ﷺ is one of humility because at another time he is reported to have said: " I am the Sayed among the children of Adam (and I say this) without any boasting." Moreover he is the seal of the Prophets. As for the day of *Qiyamat*, it is possible that it could point to partial superiority of Musa ﷺ in one aspect. That does not affect the general superiority in all other aspects and high rank Rasulallah ﷺ enjoys.

Lessons and Warnings

1. Patience in times of Calamities

If a person is plagued be calamities or miseries, it is best to fare them with patience and contentment. If that is done he can be sure of acquiring much good and he will be successful in reaching his aim.

2. A Condition for success and Victory

The one who in all affairs puts his trust and faith in Allah and with sincerity look upon Him as his supporter, then Allah will ease for him his difficulties and change his calamities into salvation and victory.

3. The Strength of Lovc for Allah

The person whose affairs with Allah reaches the stage of love for Him, then the greatest power of evil becomes like nothing in front of him.

4. Divine Help

If any of Allah's servants, fighting in the way of truth stands steadfastly against evil, Allah creates helpers for him from among the enemies and the supporters of evil.

5. The Effect of Gestacy of Imãn

If a person once has fasted the ecstacy of true faith and with this whole heart has accepted it, then this intoxication is of such a nature that from every hair on his body the truth is exclaimed.

6. The Fruits of Patience

The Fruits of patience are always sweet, no matter how much bitterness is experienced in acquiring it. Whenever it is acquired it will be sweet.

7. The Results of Slavery

The biggest effect of a life of bondage and slavery is that one is devoid of any courage, and one begins to accept the humiliating life of bondage as a bounty. and looks upon the inferior position of safety as being something great. And one begins to look upon any life of striving for better things as being trouble some.

8. Conditions for Inheriting the Land

To inherit the land on a country is for those people who without any fear and with courage and bravery is prepared to

face and over come all difficulties and obstacles, depending on Allah and relying on Him is prepared to enter into the field of striving and battle.

9. The Defeat of Baatil (evil)

No matter how great the powers of evil are and no matter how much pomp and splendour they enjoy, the end result will always be that they will be unsuccessful in their endeavours and success and victory will be for those who are righteous and pious.

10. The Result of Unjust, Evil-doing Nations

It is Allah's Sunnat and line of action that all tyrannical and unjust nations who subjugate and persecute and humiliate other weaker nations, a day surely comes when those weak ones become inheritors of the land and bring an end to the rule of those unjust rulers.

11. The End Result of those Intoxicated with Power

The groups of people or nations who are filled with their intoxication of power, government and wealth have always been prepared to wage battle against the invitation and call towards truth, but the history of nations also informs us that such groups have always been defeated in the end and have had to stare failure in the face.

12. The End Result of Rebellion

The person or group of people who recognise the truth and still reject Allah's signs with acts of disobedience, for them Allah's law is this that he destroys within them the ability to accept truth because that is the necessary result of rebellion against Allah.

13. Stead Fastness in Deen

Whether anyone accepts the word of truth or not, it remains the duty of the one conveying the truth to continue to call to it and never to stop.

14. Punishment not Reward

When a tyrannical and oppressive leader becomes a ruler of people, this is definitely not a sign of that ruler being acceptable in the sight of Allah. It is actually a punishment over that people for their evil deeds, but when the people over whom he rules becomes so impressed in their minds with the tyrants rule, it after happens that they begin to look upon that rule as being Allah's Mercy.

15. Allah's Tolerance and Patience

When a nation or any group of people becomes involved with evil acts and rebellion and disobedience, it is Allah's law that He does not immediately seize them for His punishment, but gives them respite for a time that may be they will desist from such acts. Perhaps they will understand and change their ways. But when they do not incline towards repairing and rectifying their actions, and their rebellion and disobedience reaches a specific limit, then He seizes them and destroy them.

16. The Nature of Man's Knowledge

It is not fitting for any person on earth, even if he be a Prophet or a Rasul, to make this claim that in this world there is no greater person in knowledge than him. He should rather refer it to Allah's knowledge.

17. Slavery is a Curse

For the followers of the Religion of Islam slavery is a great curse, which is sign of Allah's anger and wrath. To be

contented with it is synonymous to be contented with punishment from Allah and with Allah's curses.

Important Points

The Position of Divine Revelation

The statements of the Holy Qur'ãn are a real test for those followers of European thought, especially those who are quick to accept every point of research of the Orientalists with out any questions and are prepared to believe truly in the 'truth' of their researches, and for those who at all times finds doubts in the Qur'ãn, who consider their theories and explanations as being more acceptable than the Qur'ãn, which is Divine Revelation. Yet they should also bear in mind that these European Researchers and scholars very often discard their previously held views to accept new ones. One should also bear in mind that the path of faith and *Yaqeen* which had been established by Divine Revelation i.e., the Qur'ãn has not once been found to be necessary to change its position at all.

The Effects of Continuous Slavery and Bondage

It is an accepted fact of history that when a nation has been in a state of bondage for centuries, then their bad state does not merely end here where their bad position, poverty, miserable condition becomes visible. In fact more worse than their practical weakness is their mental weakness and lack of courage. They lose all courage and bravery. They become contented with their weakness and have a hopeless-ness in their make-up and they consider humiliation as an indication of patience. Therefore when a Messenger of Allah calls them

to pull them out of this mental weakness and encourage them towards courage and bravery, this seems to them to be a very difficult or even impossible task. Sometimes they are frightened by the difficulties and begin to fight among themselves and sometimes they begin to cast doubts on the Messenger who guides them. Should any obstacle arise along the way they even put the blame on their Nabi or leader accusing him of being the cause of than misfortunes.

The Blessings of Imãn

In the sight of Allah criterion for honour lies in truth and sincerity and in faithfulness in being a bondsman of His. It does not lie in worldly wealth and riches or in pomp and splendour. However the person who attains honour in His sight, He also grants him all these things.

ADDITION BY THE ARRANGER OF THIS VOLUME

The Imãn of a Baedwi

In the National Geographic Magazine of January 1976 a journalistic survey by Harvey Arden appears under the title "In search of Moses;" is printed. In this account of the circumstances Harvey Arden explained how he followed the path taken by the Israelites according to the Biblical records. He followed the northern and southern routes which Nabi Musa ﷺ took out of Egypt over the Red Sea and where Fir'own was drowned. Arden also produced a map giving all the places where Nabi Musa ﷺ passes. However there was a bit of doubt as to which specific route Nabi Musa ﷺ took. This is not surprising.

In the end he wrote: "That for which he searched, he did find but he imagines with more certainty that in that land after such a search and investigation he became convinced of the presence of "Allah, the one without any associate" whose glory Musa ﷺ had perceived when in this sacred surroundings he went to fetch some fire. Praise be to Allah, he found the simple understanding of Allah's presence from a Bedouin herdsman as can be seen from the following conversation:

> Arden: Are you the owner of this land?
>
> Muslim Baedwi: "The earth belongs to Allah."
>
> Arden: "And this tree."
>
> Muslim Baedwi: "This tree also belongs to Allah."
>
> (Then he said after a thought): This olive tree is mine."
>
> (The answer of the Baedwi reminds us of the answer which Nabi Musa ﷺ gave in a speech to his people:)
>
> "Musa ﷺ said: O people seek Allah's help and have patience verily the earth belongs to Allah. He grants it to whomsoever of His servants He wishes." *(Al-A'raaf)*

Towards the end of his survey Arden quotes another faith Kindling incident:

> "Looking towards the outside I saw a young Arab herdsman who was herding his sheep in this valley; which had been filled with water through the staff of Nabi Musa ﷺ. This young man put down his stick and climbed onto one side of the mountain and there began to pray his *Salaah* of *Maghrib*, bending his head and

prostrating before Allah at such a time when the red glow at sunset was quite visible seeing this scene affected me in unexplainable terms. No other scene can be more impressive than this. At this stage my search for Musa ﷺ was terminated and a new life began."

The Greatness of the Sahaba

When we ponder over the behaviours of Bani Israel, we feel a special appreciation for the greatness and righteous ness of the *Sahabah*. On the one side were the continuous bounties from Allah on Bani Israel and from their side the continuous rejection and disobedience and rebellion. Compare that with the strength of *Imãn*, their truthfulness and purity, their patience in spite of numerous obstacles and their exceptional love for Rasulallah ﷺ. You cannot but be impressed by those things. Not one incident can be told where in the face of obstacles any of the *Sahabah* cut off their relationship with *Imãn*. Not only that it is even hard to find anyone mentioning a word of complaint.

Hazrat Yushaa Bin Noon عليه السلام

The Mention of Yushaa' in the Qur'ãn

Nabi Yushaa' is one of the children of Israel belonging to the family of Nabi Yusuf. His name is not mentioned in the Qur'ãn. In *Surah Kahf* on two occasions there is a mention of the young man who accompanied Nabi Musa عليه السلام on a journey when he went to meet Hazrat Khidr. According to a *Hadith* reported by Hazrat Ubay bin Kahb this young man was Yushaa' bin Noon. He was Nabi Musa (*Alaihis Salãm*)s' special assistant in his life time and after the death of Nabi Haroon and Nabi Musa عليه السلام he became his successor. Among the delegation which was sent to spy out the conditions of Canaan's unbelievers and tyrant rulers, he was one and when Nabi Musa عليه السلام tried to encourage Bani Israel to rise to the occasion and promised them Allah's help and victory if they were prepared to proceed into *Jihad*. Thus after Nabi Musa عليه السلام, after 40 years under Yushaa's leadership the next generation of Israelites entered the Holy land and they conquered Canaan, Syria, and the East of Jordan.

Entry into the Holy Land

The detail of the conquest is this: Allah, after forty years, informed Yushaa ﷺ' to take the Israelites and move in the direction of the promised land and attack the tyrannical rulers there and His help would be with them.

Hazrat Yushaa ﷺ related Allah's command to Bani Israel and they came out of the Sinai desert and marched on the first city of Canaan-Jericho. They challenged the inhabitants who put up stiff opposition. In the end the people of Jericho were defeated and Bani Israel had a great victory. from there they continued on their campaign until they conquered the whole land of Canaan. Until they once again became owners of their fore father's land.

Disobedience

Regarding the successful entry of Bani Israel into the Holy Land and their victory over the enemy the Qur'ãn states:

> "And we said: "Enter this town and eat of the plenty there in, as you wish, but enter the gate with humility in posture and in words and we shall forgive you your faults and increase the portion of those who do good.
>
> But the transgressors changed the word from that which had been given them. So we sent on the transgressors A plaque from heaven for that they infringed (our command) repeatedly."
>
> (2:57—58)

Almost the same incident is related in *Surah Al'A'raafi'* twenteeth *Ruk'u*. In these verses Allah made a clear distinction between the true and humble servants on the one

side and the proud arrogant ones on the other side. It says that the humble and obedient ones do not enter into battle for their own sake or their own elevation, but fights against Allah's enemies, and the evil, disobedient ones and to bring an end to the injustices and rebellious nature of unjust ones, so that through their efforts justice should result and Allah's word become supreme. Hence when they are successful they do not show their pleasure with arrogance and grandeur, but instead exhibit humility and in meckness fall down in prostration and when they enter the conquered lands they enter with gratitude and in Humility.

Allah's Punishment

Bani Israel were ordered to enter the city with a specific sentence on their lips. There were those who chose to change that sentence to something else and for doing this they were punished, but the Qur'ãn does not give details of the punishment. It only speaks about "from the heavens a big punishment was sent." It shows that for this disobedience and ungratefulness, not all of Bani Israel was punished, as the untoward had not been committed by all of them.

Warnings and Lessons

1. From the incidents of Hazrat Yushaa' and Bani Israel, the thing that draws our attention most is the fact that it is a persons human and ethical duty that when he has been saved from a great trial or calamity and later reaches his intended aim successfully, he should not become caught up in the trap of becoming arrogant and proud. He should not consider the achievement as being his own but should with gratefulness towards Allah realise his own weakness and should bend his

head begging that Allah should ever cover him in mercy and also keep him in mercy in the here after.

2. The Nation on whom Allah's favours and bounties descend in open signs, if they instead of being grateful and obedient resort to disobedience and ungratefulness, they very quickly become the victims of Allah's punishment because their disobedience and rebellion takes place after having themselves observed Allah's great signs and as such they become deserving of that punishment.

Hazrat Hizkeel عليه السلام

The Qur'ãn and Hazrat Hizkeel عليه السلام

The name of Nabi Hizkeel عليه السلام is not mentioned in the Qur'ãn, but in *Surah Baqarah* an incident is mentioned and according to the saintly elders and predecessors of Islam the reference is to Nabi Hizkeel (*Ezekiel*) عليه السلام. The incident is related like this in the Qur'ãn.

"Did you not turn your vision to those who abandoned their homes though they were thousands (in number) for fear of death?

Allah said to them: "Die". Then He restored them to life.

For Allah is full of bounties to mankind but most of them are ungrateful." (2:243)

In the Books of *Tafseer* this report is related by Abdullah bin Abbaas رضي الله عنه and other Sahaba that when their King or Prophet, Hizkeel عليه السلام said to Bani Israel: "Be prepared to fight against such and such an enemy and do your duty towards the elevation of Allah's word, they ran away out of fear for their lives and thought that they were escaping from *Jihad* and were safe. They went to settle in a far off valley. This action of their caused Allah's displeasure and His wrath caused death to overcome them. They all died. One week later Hazrat Hizkeel

ﷺ happened to pass that way and he was very sorry at their condition and he prayed to Allah to save them all from death. So that their lives can become a warning and a lesson to themselves and to others besides them. The *Du'a* was accepted and they all became risen from the dead as a warning for others.

Important Points

With regard to Hazrat Hizkeel ﷺ two important points are note worthy viz rewiving the dead and *Jihad*. Both these points are further elucidated.

Reviving the Dead

Those people who have read our discussion on *Moujizah* will find no need to resort to various interpretations in connection with the reviving of the dead during the era of Hazrat Hizkeel ﷺ. It is true that in this world after death a person is not brought back to life. It is the general law that he will only be brought to life on day of *Qiyamat*.

However Allah also has a special law according to which for a special reason and wisdom it is not only possible that life can be returned in this world, and this does happen occasionally whenever Allah wishes.

In our age there is the new art of spiritualism which believes in the soul being a completely different created being from the body and after the rotting of the body and destruction of its elementary structure the soul remains alive and well. Moreover the Being who initially gave man his bodily structure, is surely able to rebuild that structure after it had been destroyed. For this reason there should not be any hesitation why we can not accept the reviving of the dead and there is no need to search for other interpretation to explain away the reviving of the dead.

Jihad

When a person's mind has accepted the fact that good and bad, life and death are all subject to Allah's predestination, he should not believe for one moment that he would somehow be able to frustrate any of Allah's decree. And if at one place Allah's decree is in operation he will be able to free of it at another place. This is not so.

In Islam's sight, the view of predestination's philosophy should be that a person should build up this *Yaqeen* that my duty is to carry out the orders of Allah. As for the fear that in carrying out His order, there is fear of losing one's life or of destruction to one's family, that does not lie in my hands. If Allah had predestined such destruction, He will create the means and ways of letting that happen. Once this '*Yaqeen*' comes into a person, it makes him a brave and courageous person, keeping away from cowardice. His eyes are only then set upon remaining steadfast.

Lessons

1. It a person is endowed with a right-minded nature, then for his guidance on the right path it will be enough that his attention should once only be drawn towards thought and the use of the mind. His human nature will of itself direct towards following the straight path, seeking the intended objective. However if a person's nature there is any crookedness. Then even if time and again a call is made to such a person with the idea of straightening the crookedness, then after every call made to him his competence and preparedness sink back and the opposite takes place in that he falls deeper into negligence and disobedience. So far does this continue until that stage is reached which the Qur'ãn describes

as: "Allah has sealed their hearts and upon their eyes and ears a veil is placed."

The Allah's punishment descends on them and forever they become the victims of His curses, and they become worthy of this announcement:

"They are struck with humiliation and poverty and they because deserving of Allah's wrath and anger."

Hence Bani israel's continuous disobedience and rebellion in the face of Allah's commands have led their crooked nature to be brought on this latter path. And even in the period of Hazrat Hazkeel ﷺ they were busy acting in this way, except for a small group of them who at all times were prepared to submit to the ways and guidance of the Prophets (*Alaihimus Salãm*) and in spite of their faults, held onto that straight path.

2. Even though *Jihad* is for some members of a nation a message towards death which deprives them of worldly pleasures, it is for the nation an elixe of life and a guarantee of life and existence, and a means towards gaining everlasting life in the here after. This is that philosophy of a Muslim which made them superior to other nations, that the one who elevates the work of Allah-even if he loses his worldly life-the fighter in Allah's path if he tastes death, he becomes an honoured martyr.

And say not to those who are slain in the way of Allah:

"They are dead." May they are living, though you preserve it not." (2:154)

Hence for those trying to save their lives for fear of death in *Jihad* the following warning is sounded:

> "If any do turn his back to them on such a day, unless it be in a stratagem of war, or to retreat, to a troop of his own, he draws on himself the wrath of Allah and his abode is hell-an evil refuge indeed."

3. Islam has declared bravery to be a good characteristic and has declared cowardice as one of the lowest characteristics. In one *Hadith* where Rasulallah ﷺ enumerated the bad characteristics, he is reported to have said:

> "Being a Muslim it is possible that person may be guilty of slips and faults, but together with Islam cowardice cannot be found in the same person."

It should however be remembered that to show great strength at the time of being tested is not bravery. Bravery means to remain stead fast on truth and to stand against evil without any fear.

Hazrat Ilyaas عليه السلام

Ilyaas عليه السلام *in the Qur'ãn*

In the Qur'ãn Hazrat Ilyaas عليه السلام is mentioned twice once in *Surah An'aam* and again in *Surah Saffaat*. In *An'aam* his name is only mentioned as him being one of the Prophets and in *Saffaat* there is somewhat more detailed description of his mission. As far as his mission is concerned the *Mufassireen* and the historians are of the opinion that he was sent to the people of *Shaam* (Syria) for their guidance and the centre of his mission was in the wellknown city of *Ba'labak*.

The people of *Balabak* were idol-worshipper who worshipped the god Ba'al and were far removed in their belief from the Oneness of God. According to the *Mufassireen* this god Baal was made out of gold, twenty feet high. He had four faces and four hundred servants were at all times at his service.

The people of Hazrat Ilyaas عليه السلام apart from other idols, had a special worship for this idol.

The Qur'ãn states: "So also was Ilyaas among those sent by us. Behold he said to his people: "Will you not fear Allah?"

Will you call upon Baal and for sake the best of Creator?

Allah, your Lord and cherisher. And the Lord and cherisher of your fore fathers.

But they rejected him and they not certainly be called up for punishment.

> Except the sincere and devoted servants of Allah." (37:123—128)

Admonition

In spite of the story of Hazrat Ilyas ﷺ being mentioned in the Qur'ãn[1] so concisely, yet this lesson comes through quite clearly: the mental make-up of Bani Israel had become so changed for the worse that there was no evil in this world which they were not keen to proform and there was no virtue which they intended to strove for. In spite of the continuous and successive appearance of Prophets and messengers they still held onto idol-worship, and worship of the heavenly bodies. In fact there was not a form of polytheism which they did not follow at some time or another.

In the Qur'ãn where it mentions the various incidents about Bani Israel and their unfortunate wretchedness and perverseness, we are at the same time admonished that now that the chain of Prophet hood has been terminated and now that the arrival of the Last Prophet ﷺ had put an end to all that with the final Divine message, it is of the atmost importance not to follow Bani Israel and adopt their perverse nature and mental make-up. It is a lesson for us to steadfastly hold onto Allah's commands and not to adopt any crookedness and disobey Him.

Note: In the Book of John in the Bible Nabi Ilyaas ﷺ is called Eliah.

Hazrat Al-Yasa عليه السلام

According to History Hazrat Al-Yasa عليه السلام is the cousin of Nabi Ilyaas عليه السلام. He was also his vice and successor. During the early part of his life he used to be in the company of Hazrat Ilyaas عليه السلام. After the demise of Nabi Ilyaas عليه السلام Allah appointed him as a Nabi for the guidance of Bani Israel. He continued to guide Bani Israel in the same way that Hazrat Ilyaas عليه السلام did.

Mention of Al-Yasa' in the Qur'ãn

Hazrat Al-Yasa' عليه السلام is only mentioned twice in the Qur'ãn.

1. "And Ismael عليه السلام, Al-Yasa' عليه السلام, Yunus عليه السلام and Loot عليه السلام. And to all (of them) we gave favour above the nations." (6:86)
2. "And remember Ismael عليه السلام, Al-Yasa' عليه السلام and Zulkifl عليه السلام Each of them was of the Company of good."

Lesson: Among Bani Israel there were quite a few cases where one Nabi stayed in the company of another and was later appointed to the same office. From this we deduce that the company of the pious is a sure means towards getting to righteousness.

"A short while in the company of the saintly is better than a hundred years of obedience."

Hazrat Shamweel عليه السلام

In the story of Hazrat Shamweel عليه السلام, Tauloot, Nabi Dawud and Jaaloot are also mentioned. For this reason a concise description of them follows:

Hazrat Shamweel عليه السلام in the Qur'ãn

The name of Hazrat Shamweel عليه السلام is not mentioned in the Qur'ãn. However in the following verse the reference is to him.

> "Have you not turned your vision to the chiefs of the Children of Israel after (the time of) Musa عليه السلام.
>
> They said to a Prophet among them: Appoint for us a king that we may fight in the cause of Allah." (2:246)

Taaloot

In accordance with this prayer and request by Bani Israel to Hazrat Shamweel عليه السلام, Allah sent Tauloot to be that king.

> "The Prophet said to them: Allah has appointed Tauloot as king over you." (2:247)

Jaaloot

The leader of the enemy force was Jaaloot, a very big giant of a man who is mentioned in *Surah Baqarah.*

(249—251)

Hazrat Daawood ﷺ

In the battle against Jaaloot the one from Bani Israel who showed bravery in fighting Jaaloot and killed him was Hazrat Dawud ﷺ.

The Mission of Hazrat Shamweel ﷺ

During the time of the Hazrat Yushaa ﷺ Bani Israel entered the Holy Land and Yushaa ﷺ remaind with them looking after their spiritual welfare and guidance. For the purpose of setting disputes, he appointed Qadis. This system continued among them.

The historians say that the Israelite dislike of Tauloot as a king was based upon the fact that Prophet hood among them was always continued through the lineage of Nabi Yaqoob (*Alaihis Salãm*)'s son Laadi while rule over them and chiefteinship was always through the lineage of the second son, Yahuda. Now it meant that the leader ship would shift to the offspring of Binyameen. This caused jealousy to result among them which they could not tolerate.

The Qur'ãn States: "Their Prophet ﷺ said to them: Allah has appointed Tauloot over you they said:" How can he exercise authority over us and he is not even with wealth in abundance.

The Prophet ﷺ said:

"Allah has chosen him above you and has gifted him abundantly with knowledge and bodily

prowes: Allah grants His authority to whosoever He pleases. Allah cares for all and He knows all things." (2:247)

Taaboot of Sakeena

The dispute over Tauloot's appointment continued until they demanded from Nabi Shamweel ﷺ that if his appointment was from Allah's side then he should show some sign. In asking to that Nabi Shamweel ﷺ replied:

> "A Sign of his authority is that there shall come to you the Ark of the covenants with assurance therein of security from your Lord and the relics left by the family of Musa ﷺ and the family of Haroon ﷺ. Carried by the Angels." (2:248)

Soon after this prophecy the Angels brought the Taaboot which had been lost to certain enemies. This box was brought to Bani Israel. This meant that now Bani Israel had no more grounds for objection or excuse. They were forced to accept Taaloot as King over them.

The Battle between Taaloot and Jaaloot

Hazrat Taaloot made a public announcement to the Israelites that they should move into battle against their enemies, the Palestinians and they moved off. When they came to a river where an incident happened. The Qur'ãn tells the story:

> "When Taaloot set forth with the armies, he said:
>
> Allah will test you at the stream: If any drink of its water He goes not with my army. Only those who taste not of it goes on with me:

A mere sip out of the hand is excused."

But they all dunk of it except a few.

When they crossed the river, He and the faith ful ones with him they said: "This day we cannot cope with Jaaloot and his forces."

But those who were convinced that they must meet Allah, said:

"How often by Allah's will had a small force vanquished a big one?"

Allah is with those who patiently persevere."

(2:249)

In short the result was that those who at the river drank of the water and so disobeyed an order said that they would be unable to cope in battle with the might of Jaaloot, having no strength to match him, but on the other hand those who with held themselves and obeyed their *Ameer*, said without any fear: "We will definitely meet the enemy in battle because Allah has always shown that small forces defeat larger and stronger forces on condition that there be faith in Allah, sincerity and stead fastness. These *Mujahideen* then made sincere supplications to Allah for help and success.

The Qur'ãn further relates:

"When they advanced further to meet Jaaloot and his forces, they prayed: "Our Lord pour out constancy on us and make our steps firm. Help us against those who reject faith."

The Bravery of Hazrat Dawud عليه السلام

The army of Bani Israel under the general ship of Hazrat Taaloot stood ready in battle lines against Jaaloot. Among

them was a young man named Daawood ﷺ. He entangled Jaaloot in combat and showed great courage as he managed to kill the giant Jaaloot. The Qur'ān states:

> "By Allah's will they, (the Israelites) routed them (the philistines) and his forces and Dawud killed Jaaloot." (2:251)

In this battle Banu Israel was successful and during this time Nabi Shamweel ﷺ passed away.

Lessons and Warnings

1. The passion for freedom and for the protection of one's rights are feelings that first are awakened in the prominent ones among nations and from there it spreads gradually to the ordinary members. The nation among whom those prominent ones are most in number these passions tend to be strongest and most widespread.

2. Islam clarifies this point that sovereignty and leadership is not dependant upon wealth and riches, nor on offspring or lineage, but knowledge and strength are such qualities which could be made criteria, because truth and justice, proper planning and correct opinion which are prominent conditions for government and rule are created by wealth, lineage and offspring. For a proper ruler it is required that he should be "abundantly endowed with knowledge and with bodily prowess.".

3. When truth and false hood meet in battle and on the side of truth we find sincere ones with passions of sacrifice in them standing up to defend the side of truth and inside them there is self-reliance and

dependence on Allah, then the criterion for success does not lie in the numbers of fighters on both sides. The majority becomes overwhelmed by the minority and the minority will end the battle as victorious.

Then came a time when among Bani Israel there was no *Nabi* and no *Rasul*. Neither did they have a single King. Because of this various of the neighbouring nations took the chance to attack them. In this manner a Palestinian nation from the area of Ghazza attacked them and Bani Israel were defeated to such an extent that they were force to give up the Taaboot' a box in which there were the original copy of the Torah and certain relies which originally belonged to Nabi Musa ﷺ and Nabi Haroon ﷺ.

At such a time Allah appointed one of the Qadis as a *Nabi* for the guidance of Bani Israel. Historians say Shamweel was a member of the offspring of Nabi Haroon. The *Nabi* to Whom reference is made in *Surah Baqarah* in the 32nd *Ruku* is this Nabi Shamweel ﷺ.

The Appointment of Hazrat Taaloot

During the time of Nabi Shamweel Bani Israel continued with their opposition to truth. Then they asked Nabi Shamweel to pray to Allah to appoint for them a king under whose leadership they would go into combat against tyrannical rulers and proceed into *Jihad* to bring an end to calamities brought down upon them.

In answer to the *Du'a* by Nabi Shamweel, Allah said to him:

> "Is it not possible that if you were commanded to fight that you will not fight.

Upon this the chiefs of the tribes said:

> "How could we refuse to fight in the cause of Allah Seeing that we were turned out of our homes and our families." (2:246)

Thereupon Nabi Shamweel again turned to Allah and Allah appointed Taaloot as king over them. Taaloot was a man superior in body and knowledge among Bani Israel. But again were they not satisfied with his appointment, raising all sorts of objections.

Hazrat Dawood 

During the discussion on Hazrat Shamweel ﷺ where we dealt with the battle between Taaloot and Jaaloot mention was made of Nabi Dawud ﷺ. At that time he was a young man but in years to come he would grow to become one of Allah's chosen Messengers to Bani Israel for their guidance as well as a *khalifa* for their social structure as a nation. During the life of Hazrat Taaloot already and after his death the rule over Bani Israel came into Dawud (*Alaihis Salãm*)'s hands.

The Nickname of Khalifa

In Bani Israel Nabi Dawud ﷺ is the first person to be a *Nabi* as well as a king on the throne. The Qur'ãn mentions this special honour and speciality in the following manner:

1) "And Allah gave power and wisdom and taught him whatever He willed." (2:251)

2) "O Dawud, we did indeed make you a vicegerent on earth." (37:26)

3) "To each of them (Sulaymaan and Dawud) we gave judgement and knowledge." (21:79)

Among all the Prophets except for Hazrat Adam ﷺ, Nabi Dawud ﷺ is the only one when the Qur'ãn calls by the

name '*Khalifa*'. This nickname points directly at Allah's attribute quality of knowledge and power. It seems that for that purpose, there is no better word to describe him except the word '*Khalifa*'.

Nabi Dawud ﷺ exected himself in the service of bringing guidance to Bani Israel. And he also supervised their social life structure. His special qualities were:

1) In the field of eloquence in public speaking he was a very good speaker and used to speak in such a manner that every word and thought was well understood and in such a manner that it appeared in a very well constructed manner.

2) His judgements between truth and false hood was such that it was a final judgement on the issue.

The Zabbur

The Qur'ãn states:

1. "And to Dawud we gave the Zabbur" (the psalms). (4:163)

2. "We did bestow upon some Prophets more gifts than on other: And we gave to Dawud (the gift of) the Zabbur (the psalms). (17:55)

Allah revealed the Zabbur to Nabi Dawud ﷺ which is such an anthology of words in which Allah is praised and thanked and in which the humility and servitude of men are admitted and recognised. In these verses of the Zabbur there are also valuable advices and admonitions. But like they did with the Torah and Injeel, Bani Israel also changed the wordings of the Zabbur, knowingly. The Qur'ãn states:

> "Of the Jews are those who displace words (of the Torah, Injeel, Zabbur) from their right places." (5:14)

Special Qualities of Dawud ﷺ

In actual fact Allah had granted special honour and rank to all Prophets and bestowed numerous favours on all His Prophets and Messengers. But in the granting of special qualities. He has made various ranks for them, one above the other. These are the ranks by which some are superior to others.

> "Those apostles we endowed with gifts, some above others." (2:253)

In this manner the mentions some specialities of Nabi Dawud ﷺ in which respect he is superior to others: These are as follows:

Nabi Dawud ﷺ *and Glorification of Allah*

Hazrat Dawud ﷺ used to busy himself much with glorifying Allah and praising His Name. In this he had such a melodious voice that not only did men who heard him fall into an ecstatic trance, but also the animals and birds became so affected. They used to then gather around him, singing Allah's praises together with him. At the same time the mountains too echoed with the praises. Allah mentions this in *Surah Ambiya*, *Surah Saba'* and *Surah Saud.*

> "Have patience at what they say and remember our servant Dawud.
>
> The man of strength. For he ever turned to Allah.

> It was we that made the hills declare in unison with him our praises at eventide and at break of day." (37:16—19)

Some *Mufassireen* of the Qur'ãn wrote on these verses that the *Tasbeeh* of the animlas and birds and the mountains used to declare silently in their manner that everything in this universe and their forms and every atom in them bear witness to the existence of their creator. This was their *Tasbeeh*.

In contrast to that interpretation the research scholars declare that the animals, plants and stones do in actual fact perform *Tasbeeh* in reality and for this reason the Qur'ãn states explicitly:

> "The seven heavens and the earth and all beings therein declare His glory. There is not a thing in but celebrates His praise. And yet you understand not. Verily He is oft for bearing, Most forgiving." (17:44)

In this respect two things become clear: firstly, Everything in the Universe perform the *Tasbeeh* of Allah and, secondly, men and *Jinn* are unable to perceive their *Tasbeeh*. This means that in actual fact these parts of the Univers is busy singing Allah praises. But this *Tasbeeh* cannot be perceived by men. But sometimes such *Tasbeeh* is made to been seen and heard by the Prophets (*Alaihis Salãm*) as a sign of a miracle to them. This was one of Nabi Dawud (*Alaihis Salãm*)'s specialities.

Iron Becomes Soft in His Hands

Regarding this, the Qur'ãn states:

"It was we who taught him the making of coats of mail for your benefit to guard you from each others violence will you then be grateful?"

(21:80)

Hazrat Dawud ﷺ is the first person who through being shown by Divine Revelation made armour clothing made out of iron rings, which were soft and light could be used for protection in the field of battle while still being able to more about with ease. This proved to be of great benefit to the soldiers in battle.

Speaking and Conversing to the Birds

Both Nabi Dawud ﷺ and his son Sulaiman ﷺ were granted from Allah's side one more special gifts in that both of them were given the knowledge of the speech of birds. A detailed discussion of this follows under the history of Nabi Sulaiman ﷺ.

In Bukhari's *Kitabul Ambiya* there is a report that Hazrat Dawud ﷺ used to complete a full recitation of the Zabbur in such a short time that he used to start it as he started tying the saddle to his horse and finished the reading just as he finished tying the saddle. He also had the ability to pronounce words so fast that what another person would require hours to read and pronounce, he would do so in very little time, much less that the ordinary person.

The Matter of Farm Lands

The Qur'ãn states:

"And remember Dawud and Sulaiman when they gave judgment in the matter of the field into which the sheep of certain people had

strayed by night we did witness their judgment.

To Sulaiman we inspired the right understanding of the matter to each of them judgment and knowledge." (21:78)

All the *Mufassireen* in explaining the above verse relate the story according to the reports by Abdullah bin Masud and Abdullah bin Abbaas ﷺ that once two persons entered upon Hazrat Dawud ﷺ with a case. The plaintiff complaint that the other person's sheep entered his cultivated field and trampled over his growing field and so destroyed everything that was growing there.

Nabi Dawud (*AlaihisSalãm*)'s judgement in the case was that seeing the amount of loss suffered by the complainant but was more or less equal in value to the flock of sheep of the respondent, the flock of sheep should be granted to the complainant as compensation for his loss.

At that time Sulaiman ﷺ was a young boy of about eleven years. Its was sitting near his father at the time. He said to his father: "Father your judgement seems to be correct. However, I feel it would be more appropriate and suitable if the whole flock of sheep should be granted to the complainant so that he can make use of its milk and wool and that the respondent be ordered to repair the losses of the cultivated land and bring it back to the state in which it was prior to the damage. Then when he has restored the cultivated crops to that level he may take back his flock."

Nabi Dawud ﷺ approved of this judgement wholeheartedly. The Qur'ãn also mentions that this Judgement was move fitting and praises the understanding of Hazrat Sulayman ﷺ; as if Sulayman (*Alaihis Salãm*)'s judgement seemed better. It does not however mean that because of

superiority in this one matter that Sulaiman ﷺ was higher in rank or more superior to his father; because the Qur'ãn gives over all more superiority to Nabi Dawud ﷺ.

The Story of the Fat Tailed Sheep

In *Surah Saud* the story is told in this manner:

"Has the story of the disputants reached you. Behold they climbed over the wall of the private chamber.

When they entered the presence of Dawud, And he was terrified of them they said: "Fear not, we are two disputants, one of whom has wronged the other, decide now between us with truth and treat us not with injustice but guide as to the even path.

"This man is my brother. He has ninety-nine ewes and I have but one.

Yet he says: "Commit her to my care and he is (moreover) harsh tone in speech.

Dawud said: He has undoubtedly wronged you in demanding your single ewe to be added to his flock of ewes. Truly many are the partners (in business) who wrong each other.

"Not so do those who believe and work deeds of righteousness;

And how few they are?

And Dawud realised that we had tested him.

He asked forgiveness of his Lord, fell down bowing in prostration and turned (to Allah in repentance).

> So we forgave him this (lapse), he enjoyed indeed, a near approach to us, and a beautiful place of (final) return." (37:21—25)
>
> "O Dawud we did indeed make you a vicegerent on earth.
>
> So judge you between men in truth (and justice).
>
> Not follow you the lusts of your heart, for they will mistlead you from the path of Allah. For those who wander astray from the path of Allah is a penalty grievous, for that they cannot forget the day of Account. (37:21—26)

In these verses there is mention of a test of Nabi Dawud ﷺ from Allah. Initially he did not understand it was a test but suddenly the realisation came to him that this is a test from Allah and immediately as is the case with Allah's chosen Messengers, he turned to Allah in repentance, seeking forgiveness, which was granted by Allah, and led further to his acquiring a place of high rank with Allah.

The Tafseer of the Verses

The Qur'ãn only mentions as much as in quoted above. There is no detailed description of the test. In this respect some *Mufassirs* went depended on various Israeli stories and fabrication to explain the matter, but these are not acceptable at all.

Maulana Hifzur Rahmaan Seoharwy discusses all those stories in detail and finally came to the following conclusion: "In our opinion the best interpretation for those verses is that which best fits in with the wording and connection with the preceding verses and is in accordance with the following verses and is best in understanding the

sequence of wordings, and that which is based on a report of Abdullah bin Abbaas ﷺ. That '*Athar*' of Abudullah bin Abbas is as follows: Abdullah bin Abbaas ﷺ says that Nabi Dawud ﷺ has for the sake of division of work divided them into four days: one solely for *Ibaadah*, one day for judging cases in disputes, one day for himself and one day for preaching and guidance of Bani Israel."

But among those days most importance was granted to the day set aside solely for worship of Allah. In actual fact no other day of his was ever completely devoid of *Ibaadat*, but one day was specially set out for it. During that day no other work was touched. The Qur'ãn refers to him being *Innahu Owwabun*, a reference to this special quality.

Further the Qur'ãn and the history of Bani Israel tells us that Hazrat Dawud ﷺ used to close the doors around him as he proceeded with glorifying Allah and praising His name, so that there can be no disturbance. In other words there was only one day when it was extremely difficult to reach him as he was completely cut off from Bani Israel, when as on the other days there was always a chance to meet him in cases of unforseen circumstances.

Even though the setting aside of a special day for *Ibaadat* is in itself a praiseworthy deed, in such a manner that a person has no contact at all with other human beings, yet is it something which would be against the aims and objects of being "a Prophet" or of being "a *Khalifa* on earth." Moreover Allah did not create Nabi Dawud ﷺ to be secluded ascetic, but instead made him a *Nabi* and granted him vicegerency and sent him for the leadership and guidance of his people. Similarly his life's main aim was "guidance of mankind" and "service to mankind" and was not based on "abundance of worship."

Hence Allah wanted to test Nabi Dawud ﷺ by sending two men to him with a dispute on the special day set aside for *Ibaadat*, jumping over the wall of his special privately secluded place and entering unto him. When Hazrat Dawud ﷺ saw the two men in front of him he naturally experienced fear. They quickly realized it and put him at ease and told him the reason for their coming was for him to give judgement in a dispute between them. He listened to them and gave judgement.

At this stage the Qur'ãn turns away from the judgement as it seems logical to anyone with thinking faculties, that Hazrat Dawud (*Alaihis Salãm*)'s judgement was correct, and only emphasized and highlighted that part of the story which dealt with guidance viz performing an injustice on others by force of your might.

Anyway after giving judgement Nabi Dawud ﷺ immediately became aware of the fact that Allah had tested him. He immediately understood and repented with sincerity, prostrating to Allah and begging for forgiveness. Allah accepted his plea for forgiveness and gave him this advice. O Dawud, We have made you our *Khalifa* on earth and your duty is to perform this duty with diligence and to remember at all times that on this path it is of the utmost importance to act with justice and not to stray from the straight path.

Nabi Dawud (Alaihis Salãm)'s Life Span

Hazrat Dawud ﷺ had a very long life span and ruled over Israel for a period of seventy years. According to the Torah he was buried at a place called Sidon.

Lessons

1. When Allah decides to appoint someone as an eminent messenger of his and to endow his with special beautiful

qualities, He causes his natural ability to shine from the initial stages.

2. Some lines it happens that we consider something to be insignificant or unimportant but later the unfolding events prove that thing to be of utmost importance.

3. There has always been a major different between the ' Khalifa of Allah' on the one side and a "*Shaitanic* king' on the other side. The former in spite of being in possession of pomp and splendour is always inclined towards humility and towards service towards fellow-men, whereas the latter is always found to be arrogant, egotism, oppression and injustice, looking upon his fellow-men as a means towards earning is own comforts and desires.

4. It is Divine Law that the person who has reached a stage of the height of his honour, if he then admits Allah's gifts to him and expressed thanks and gratitude, to Him, Allah will increase His bounties towards him. The whole life of Nabi Dawud ﷺ is living proof and evidence of this.

5. Even though *Deen* has a great connection with spiritualism, still we find that worldly power (*Khilaafat*) is a great support and ally for it. *Deen* is the gurantee for *Deeny* as well as worldly reparations whereas *Khilaafat* and power is the means towards acquiring a just system of organisation. We have the well-known quotation from Hazrat Usman ﷺ:

   "Undoubtedly Allah accomplished through the man of power (*Khalifa*) that which He does not always acquire through the Qur'ān."

   (*Al-Bidayah wal-Nihaya Vol. 10*)

6. Allah has mentioned in the various verses of the Qur'ãn on the subject of granting kindgom and sovereignty indicated that a man should remember throughly that kingdom and sovereignty over land, the giving and the taking thereof is solely in Allah's Hands. For this the history of the world's greatest emperors and despolic values are adequte evidence.

The Qur'ãn states:

"Say: O Allah, Lord of Power (and Rule).

You give power to whom you please and You strip of power from whom you please.

You endue with honour whom You please, and You bring low whom you please. In your Hand is all good and you have power over all things."

(3:26)

However He has made a fixed law for the granting and taking away of Power, which may be called the'*Sunnat* of Allah': That law is this that nations are granted power and government in two ways viz., firstly as Divine inheritance and secondly through 'worldly means'. According to the first way, when power is granted when the beliefs and deeds of the people are in accordance with Allah's will. In other words the beliefs in Allah is correct and firm and in their deeds the individual as well as the whole society are righteous as would be described as '*Saaliheen*' in the Qur'ãn.

If the nation is such, the nation is worthy of being granted Allah's title of being "*Khilafat Ilahiyya*" i.e., in this world they are vicegerents of Allah and the true successors of the Prophets (*Alaihis Salãm*). And Allah's promise is that the people who in beliefs and deeds are the heirs of the Prophets (*Alaihis Salãm*) they will be the heirs of this earth

as well as hereafter—and even if there shound stand a rast mountain between themselves the inheritance of the hereafer, they will over come that obstacle and Allah will fulfill his promise to them. Says Allah:

> "Before this we wrote in the Zabbur after the message (given to Musa ﷺ): My Servant, the righteous shall inherit the earth." (21:105)

> "For the earth is Allah's to give as a heritage to such of His servants as He pleases." (7:128)

In these verses Allah's pleasure lies with those who are His rigthteous servants and if this righteousness is not found in any nation, then in spite of them being claimants to being attached to Islãm, they cannot become the recipients of the heritage, and they will not be able to lay claim to 'Divine *Khilaafat*'. And for such a people the promise of Allah does not fit.

A warning lesson (*Ibrat*) is provided by the fact that the king sitting on a throne is not being given power to rule over others just because Allah is pleased with him, but because the ture heirs of rule and power here as a result of their bad deeds lost the right to take up tha power. And now for the sake of the benefit of this world it is not a condition for power and rule that the ruler should be a Muslim or a *Kaafir* or a *Mushrik*.

> Allah says: "And Allah granteth His authority to whom He pleases." (2:247)

If a Muslim should try to bring about a change for the better in his corrupt life and adopt the ways of the proas and righteous ones, then Allah gives them the same good news which He promises.

"Allah has promised to those among you who believe and work righteous deeds, that He will of a surely grant them in the land Inheritance (of power) as He granted it to those before them; that He will established their religion—the one which he chose for them and that he will charge (their state) after the fear, in which they lived to one of security and peace." (24:55-56)

One Very Important Point

There is absolutely no doubt therein that the worship Allah and to glorify Him and praise Him is the main objective in the life of any Muslim. However for those persons whom He had chosen for the guidance of mankind or for the service of mankind it is better to remain busy with delivering the duty for which they had been chosen than to be busy with abundant *Ibaadat*.

No doubt for a sufi or an ascetic, the more he secludes himself from the rest of mankind, spending his time in worship, the more he rises in the ranks of sainthood. This is the opposite as in the case of the position of prophethood and the position of *Khilaafat*, there the main aim of granting these positions of anyone is to serve mankind and to guide them aright, and not to become more pious.

An Importnat Clarification

Maulana Hifzur Rahman Seohárwy has, after explaining Nabi Sulaiman (*Alaihis Salãm*)'s story in detail, made an important point. That point is as follows: Our Nabi ﷺ has said on one occasion that those reports of the *Ahlul Kitaab* which are not against the Qur'ãn and Islamic teachings, may be quoted. But we people have disregarded the chief condition in this statement viz., that those reports should

not be against he Qur'ãn and Islamic teachings, and have not only began to quote all manner of Israeli *Riwaayaat*, but have also quoted those reports in our *Tafseer* of the Qur'ãn. This is wrong and to give these israeli *Rewaayaats* a place in our interpretation of Qur'ãnic verses can be very destructive. The correct line of action is that which the research scholars of Islam have adopted that there should be complete faith in the verses of the Qur'ãn and to avoid all heretical interpretation and to consider such interpretations as distoration of the Qur'ãn. Their aim is to keep the Qur'ãn pure of all Israeli *Riwayaat*.[1]

For detail see *Qassasul Qur'ãn*, Vol. 2, p. 171-172

Hazrat Sulaiman عليه السلام

Lineage and Childhood

Hazrat Sulaiman عليه السلام is the son of Nabi Dawud عليه السلام and Allah has blessed him with intelligence and a special ability to settle disputes. In the respect we have already seen how he passed judgement between two disputants who brought their case to the court of his father.

Special Status of Sulaiman عليه السلام

The Historians state that Sulaiman عليه السلام had reached the age of manhood when Nabi Dawud عليه السلام passed away and Allah made him the successor of his father as king and prophet.

The Qur'ãn states:

> "And Sulaiman was Dawud (*Alaihis Salãm*)'s heir." (26:16)

> "To each of them [Dawud عليه السلام and Sulaiman عليه السلام] we gave judgement and knowledge." (21:79)

Special Bounties on Sulaiman عليه السلام

As in the case of Hazrat Dawud عليه السلام, Allah bestowed on Sulaiman عليه السلام some specialities and points of superiority

and granted unto him some such bounties which became a special sign of his high rank.

Understanding the Speech of Birds

The Qur'ãn states:

> "And Sulaiman was Dawud's heir. He said: "O People, we have been taught the speech of birds and on us has been besowed (a little) of all things. This is indeed Grace manifest (from Allah.) (26:16)

From the manner in which the Qur'ãn mentions the gift it appears Naml that this was no ordinary gift. It was something that too could be called a *Mou'jizah* a miracle as it something above and beyond normal natural abilties and in solely a gift from Allah which may be mentioned as one of Allah's special signs which is granted to His special chosen ones.

Sulaiman (Alaihis Salãm)'s Control over the Wind

Regarding this the Qur'ãn states:

> "And to Sulaiman We made the wind obedient.
>
> Its early morning stride was a months journey
>
> And its evening stride was a months journey."
>
> (34:12)

And further:

> "Then we subjected the wind to his power to flow gently to his order whosoever he willed."
>
> (38:36)

In these verses three things are being mentioned. Firstly it says the wind was made obedient to him. Secondly it states

that the wind were so under his control that in spite of being strong, or fast and cold, at his command it became gentle and slow bringing comfort with it. Thirdly in spite of being gentle and comforable its speed was such it used to travel in one morning the distance normally covered in a month. In other words it travelled almost faster than over presents aeroplanes. This was also one of the specialities of Hazrat Sulaiman ﷺ which should be accepted without any other interpretations.

Control over the Jinn and Animals

It is said that Hazrat Sulaiman once made the followiing *Duah*:

> "O My Lord forgive me and grant me a kingdom which suits not another after me.
>
> For you are the Granter, of bounties (without measure). (38:35)

Allah accepted this *Du'a* and granted him such a wonderful government which was not granted to anyone before him and was not granted to another after him. This power of his extended not only over human beings, but also over *Jinn* and the animals and the air and all of these used to be obedient to him. [Note the *Jinn* were also a creation of Allah as was already discussed under the story of Hazrat Adam ﷺ].

The Building of Baitul Muqaddas

According to Bukhari and Muslim there is a authentic *Hadith* reported by Hazrat Abu Zarr Ghaffari ﷺ, which says that just as Nabi Ibraheem ﷺ was the builder of the *Masjid-ul-Haraam* and became the cause for the settlement at Makkah, so also Nabi Yaqoob ﷺ laid the foundation for baitul

Muqaddas and so *Bait-ul-Muqaddas* became a place of settlement. Thereafter after a long time the *Masjid* and the town's settlement was renewed by Hazrat Sulaiman and due to his conrol over the *Jinns* a splendours building came into being. Apart from this building the *Jinns* also erected various other buildings for him as the Qur'ãn mentions:

> "And of the evil ones were some who dived for him and did other work besides. And it was we who guarded them." (21:82)

And further:

> "And there were jinns that worked in front of him, by the leave of his Lord, and if any of them turned aside from Our Command, We made him taste of the penalty of the blazing fire.
>
> They worked for him as he desires, making arches, Images, Basons as larger as reserviors, And cooking cauldrons fixed (in their places).
>
> "Work you, sons of Dawud with thanks! But few of My Servants are grateful."
>
> (34:12—13)

And further:

> "And before Sulaiman were marshalled His hosts—of *Jinns* and men and birds and they were all kept in order in ranks." (27:17)

And further:

> "And subjected to Sulaiman were made the evil ones, (including) every kind of builder and diver.
>
> As also others bound together in fetters

> Such are Our bounties, whether you bestow them (on others) or with hold them, No, account will be asked.
>
> And he enjoyed indeed a near approach to us and a beautiful place of (final) return."
>
> (37:36—40)

The buildings of the Era of Hazrat Sulaiman ﷺ which came into existence as a result of his control over the *Jinns* cause onlookers and visitors to be astonished even today. The stones were of such exquisite beauty. One wonder where it could have been brought from, and how could those stones have been laid in their places so high up.

Treasures of Copper

With regard to those grand buildings the *Mufassireen* mention that Allah had copper melted for Nabi Sulaiman ﷺ according to his needs. The Qur'ãn however does not make mention of the copper mines.

The Queen of Sheba

The Qur'ãn mentions this story in concise manner so that the main object of the story becomes known is to serve as an admonition moreover from the story the point already mentioned comes to the front viz., that Hazrat Sulaiman ﷺ understand the languages of birds. The story is told in *Surah Saba* from verse 36 to verse 44, and is told by Maulana Hifzur Rahman Seoharwy in this manner"

"Once in the court of Nabi Sulaimãn ﷺ with all its pomp and splendour, Hudhud was found to absent from his place. He said: "I find Hudhud absent from his place. This absence of his is bound to be severely punished. I shall either

punish him heavily or will slaughter him unless he can explain it with a good reason for his absence.

Soon thereafter Hudhud appeared and in reply to Nabi Sulaiman (*Alaihis Salãm*)'s question replied that he has come with such news that has not reached Nabi Sulaiman ﵇ up to then. He explained that in the region of Yemen there lived a queen whom Allah has granted everything. The throne on which she sits is a very grand one filled with beautiful things.

This queen and her people were sun-worshippers and *Shaitan* has misled them and they do not worship Allah, the One Creator of the Universe.

Hazrat Sulaiman ﵇ said:

> "The test of whether you speak the truth or falsehood will soon be known. If what you say is true, take the letter of mine and hand it to her and wait for a reply to see what she says about it."

When the Queen received the letter she said to her courtiers and advisors: "I have received this letter in which is written":

> "This letter is from Sulaiman and is in the name of Allah who is Most Beneficent, Most Merciful. You should not rebel against us or disobey. Come to me as a obedient servant of Allah."

The queen read the letter and said: O Members of My Kingdom You know that I never take any step without consultanting with you. Advise me as to what to do.

They replied: "There is no need to be over-awed by it. We are strong and possess the means to go into battle. As for

advice, the matter lies in your hands. Whatever you consider suitable, you may order and command."

She replied:

> "Undoubtedly we are strong and have power but in this matter with Sulaiman we should not be hasty. First of all we have to ascertain the extent of his strength, because the manner in which his message reached us, shows us that we should carefully consider what steps to take. My intention is that a few messengers be sent to him with some valuable gifts from which he will be able to gauge our pomp and splendour. And so that we way also ascertain what he wants from us. If indeed he is a very strong power, then our fighting him will be useless, because it is the habit of strong Kings that when they enter any city after conquest, they destroy them and humiliate the highly ranked ones. Why should we invite such ruin upon ourselves?"

The presents were sent and when the messengers with the presents entered into the presence of Hazrat Sulaiman ﷺ, he said: "You and your queen has misunderstood my message. Do you think that with these gifts, with which you seem to be very pleased, you can flatter and seduce me. Yet you can see that what Allah has granted me, your presents are nothing in comparison therewith. Take your gifts back. Tell your queen that if she does not obey my call, I will attack Saba with such a large force against which you will be incapable of putting up a defence. Then I will humiliate you and expel you from your country."

The Messenger returned to Saba and told the whole story to their Queen. They also related to her the great splendour which they had witnessed around armed Nabi Sulaiman and related how he ruled not only over men, but also *Jinn* and animals. She immediately realised that to fight him would be an invitation to complete distruction and also decided to heed to his call.

In the letter of Hazrat Sulaiman was one sentence: "Wa'tounee *Muslimeen*" "And come to me as submitters to Allah." Because the Queen of Saba was not on the deed of Nabi Sulaiman , she understood it to be on the literal meaning, which meant she had to come to him, while submitting and surrendering to him. She decided to do that and started the travel in his direction through revelation Hazrat Sulaiman came to know she was coming. He told his courtiers that he wanted her throne to be brought there before she arrives. One *Jinn* offered to bring it. Then Nabi Sulaiman (*Alaihis Salãm*)'s *wazir* offered to bring her royal throne within the wink of an eye and immediately the throne was present. Upon this Hazrat Sulaiman said: "This is the favour of my Lord. He tests me to find whether I am grateful or ungrateful. And whosoever shows gratitude, actually does benefit to his own self. And whosoever is disobedient, then Allah is unconcerned of his disobedience and the burden thereof falls upon the disobedient one."

The Nabi Sulaiman ordered that some changes be made to the throne. He wanted to see on seeing it, whether she will come to realize reality or not.

A short while later the Queen of Saba arrived and she was asked: "Is your throne like this? The intelligent queen replied: "It looks like it, as if it is it." She further replied: "I have been informed of your unequalled and unrivalled

strength. For this reason I come to you as a submitting and obedient subject and having seen the matter of the throne, it gives me more indication of your strength. Hence I declare my submission and obedience to you."

The queen understood that by declared her submission to him, she has obeyed his call to her, but her sun-worshipping belief prevented her from properly understanding his aim. Nabi Sulaiman ﷺ realised she did not understand properly and devised another plan to bring her to realisation. Nabi Sulaiman ﷺ ordered the *Jinns* to prepare a magnificent glass mansion palace, shining like water, that was unique in its splendour and appearance. In the fore-court leading to its entrance he had a big pool dug out and this was filled with water. The rest of the fore-court had a floor that was beautifully laid in with pieces of crystal so that any spectator would believe that this court was flowing with water.

The Queen of Saba was told to reside in this beautiful palace, and as she came to the fore-court she found "the flowing water." As she saw this she prepared to enter the water by lifting her clothes upto above the knees. Nabi Sulaiman ﷺ saw this and said: "There is no need for that. This is not water.

The whole palace and its fore-court is from shining cyrstial."

She then understood Hazrat Sulaiman (*Alaihis Salãm*)'s aim and like a sorrowful person exclaimed: "O Lord, by my worshipping brings other than you, I have done myself a great wrong. I now together with Sulaiman ﷺ, have faith in you alone."

In this matter she was brought to the realization of the meaning of "Come to me as one submitting to Allah."

Where is Saba

One of the well-known tribes of Qahtani is the Saba tribe. Saba was the great grand father of the tribe of Saba. This is according to Arab historians and some modern researches. Saba was the nickname. His actual name was Umar or Abdu Shams. He was noted to be a man of great bravery and courage and he was the founder of the rule over the tribe.

Their time according to historians was 1100 years before Christ. Their centre of government was in the Southern portion of Arabia in eastern region of Yemen; and the capital was a place called Ma'aarib. It was also known as the town of Saba. The area stretched up to Hadramant and on the other side the sphere of their influence went so far as the continent of Africa. In English the laud was known as Sheba.

In this story the Qur'ān did not mention the name of the Queen, but according to Arab and Jewish sources her name was Bilqees.

Hudhud

The Qur'ān has mentioned in very clear terms that the messenger between Hazrat Sulaiman ﷺ and Saba was a bird called Hud-hud. In view of the already explained fact that Nabi Sulaiman ﷺ knew how to converse with the birds it seems there is no scope for any other inter pretation here.

The Throne of the Queen

The description of the throne of the Queen of Saba was given by Hud-Hud, and in this regard the miraculous way in which Hazrat Sulaiman ﷺ had it brought to him and changed

by way of a *Mou'jizah*, it also seems that to interpret it any other way is unsound.

The Queen's Acceptance of Islãm

The Queen on having seen the prophetic splendour of Hazrat Sulaiman ﷺ came forward and embraced Islãm. In this whole episode this was actually Nabi Sulaiman's ﷺ aim to get her to submit to and worship Allah as he indicated to her in his first letter. However at that time the Queen could not properly understand his intention.

Queen's Marriage

In the Qur'ãn and the *Hadith* there is nothing to state such a marriage did in fact take place, nor is their any denial thereof.

The Death of Sulaiman ﷺ

According to the Qur'ãn with regard to the death of Nabi Sulaiman ﷺ it is said the *Jinns* were busy constructing a very big building when the news reached Hazrat Sulaiman ﷺ of his coming death. However the *Jinns* had no news thereof. They remained busy with their duties and it was only after the ants had eaten the stick on which he leaned and he fell down dead, then the *Jinns* came to realise he had died a long time ago. Then they felt sorry that they did not know the unseen otherwise they would have been freed from their duties, which they continued to perform and of fear for him.

The Qur'ãn states:

> "Then, when we decreed, (Sulaiman's) death nothing showed them His death, except a little worm of the earth, which kept slowly growing

> away at his staff, so when he fell down, the *Jinns* saw plainly, that if they had known the unseen, they would not have tarried in the humiliating penalty (of their task). (34:14)

It is said that when the *Jinns* became aware of his death, the building had been completed. That's why they were so sorry that if they had known the unseen, they would have been freed much earlier. At this stage we must point out that the Qur'ãn actually here wishes to explain how Hazrat Sulaiman ﷺ died but at the same time wishes to rebuke Bani Israel for a wrong belief they held. They believed that the *Jinns* were Knowers of the unseen. The Qur'ãn wishes to indicate to them that if the jinns were knower of the unseen they would not have remained busy with the building of buildings like Baitul Muqaddas etc. Thus the Manner in which the death took place made the *Jinns* admit that their claim to being knowers of the unseen was completely wrong.

Tafseer of Some Points

In the Holy Qur'ãn an incident pertaining to horses for *Jihad* is explained in his manner:

> "To Dawood We gave Solomon (for a son) How excellent in our service Ever did he turn (to us).
>
> Before they were brought before him at eventide, losers of the highest breeding and swift on foot.
>
> And he said: "Truly do I love the love of Sood. With a view to the Glory of my Lord." Until the Sun was hidden in the veil (of the night) "Bring them back to me."
>
> There he passed his hand over their legs and their necks." (38:30—33)

In the *Tafseer* of these verses Maulana Hifzur Rahman had a deep discussion and from the *Tafseer* of Ibn Jarer and Imam Razi he quoted a report by Hazrat Abdullah bin Abbaas ؓ from Ali bin Abi Talhah. In this report there is no mention of Sulaiman's *Salaah* having become '*Qadau*', neither is there any mention of the sun having set, nor is those any mention of slaughtering the horses. The story being told is this at a time of an important matter of *Jihad* Hazrat Sulaiman ﷺ ordered that the *Jihad* horses be brought before him from their stables. He was a man with very good knowledge about the lineage of horses and their pedigree as well as their qualities and when he found them to be of a high quality and of good stock, and in large number he was pleased and he said:

> "My love for these horses is part of such a love for things which is connected with the *Zikr* of Allah."

Just at that time the horses were sent back to the stables, so that when Hazrat Sulaiman ﷺ looked towards them again, they were removed from his eye-sight. He then ordered that they be brought back to him. When they were brought back, he touched their legs and their necks out of love for them and by virtue of the fact that they were animals used in *Jihad*.

According to this explanation *Innee Ahbabtu Hubbal Khayri'a Zikree*' means that verily my love for things and wealth, viz., the love for the houses of *Jihad*, is as a result of *Zikrullah*. And the term "*Tawaarat bil Hijaab*' the pronoun in it refers to the horses who disappeared from his sight, and there is no need to have it refer to the sun. And "*Taufikau mas-han bis sooqi wal aa'naaq*" is on its literal meaning viz., that he touched them on their upper legs and necks.

The Testing and Trial

In a very concise manner the Qur'ãn has mentioned Hazrat Sulaiman (*Alaihis Salãm*)'s test from Allah's side:

> "And We did try Sulaiman. We placed on his throne a body without life, but he did turn (to us intrue devotion).
>
> And said: O Lord, forgive me." (38:34)

In these verses, it does not say when Sulaiman was tested, who was he. It only says 'a body' was placed on his throne. Even in the *Hadith* too there is no detail. Hence Maulana Hifzur Rahman had discussed the story taking into account the opinions of the *Mufassireen*. In the end he writes:

"Imam Razi says that when Allah says He put Hazrat Sulaiman to a test, the test was this that he had to suffer a very heavy sickness and body which was thrown on his throne was his very sick body which appeared almost like a body without a soul. Then "he turned to Allah" mean is that after that he was restored to full health. In other words the aim was to bring to his notice that in spite of him being the ruler, not only was his ruling power not in his power and hands, but even his life too was not under his control. This was done to bring him to bending down in front of Allah like the other eminent prophets, and messengers and to seek Allah's forgiveness.

The Valley of the Ants

The Qur'ãn says:

> "And before Sulaiman were marshalled his hosts of jinn and men, and birds and they were all kept in order and ranks. At length where they came to a (lowly) valley of ants one of the ants

> said: "O you ants, get into your habitations, lest Sulaiman and his hosts crush you (under foot) without knowing.
>
> So he smiled amused at her speech and he said: "O my Lord, so order me that I may be grateful for your favours which you bestowed upon me and my parents, and that I may work the righteousness that pleases you." (27:17—19)

Regarding the Valley of the ants and the ants, many questions arise. Some people have tried to answer them with Israeli *Riwayaat* and Jewish fabrications, but all these discussions are fare-fatched and without substantiation. The Qur'ãn and the *Hadith* are free of such nonsensical stories.

The aim behind this story is that Allah had granted Hazrat Dawood ﷺ and Sulaiman ﷺ the ability to understand the speech of animals, which is one of the great things granted to them. This knowledge is different from other worldly knowledge and arts, but were two miracles granted to two eminent prophets. Hence just after mentioning this special bounty of Allah, comes the story of how Nabi Sulaiman ﷺ listened to the conversation of an insignificant animal like the ant in the same way that a man listens to another man. Then also when Nabi Sulaiman ﷺ had experienced it with certainty he, as it fitting for an eminent messenger of Allah expressed thanks and gratitude for the gift. To further show the importance of this incident we may mention that this *Surah* has been called *Surah al-Naml*. (The Ant)

Most historians gave their opinion that this "Valley of Ants" lies near the town of Askelon, as Ibn Batuta has mentioned, or that it lies between Bayt Jabron and Askelon. Other *Mufassireen* state that it is in Syria.

One brought Saba's Throne

During the story of the Queen of Saba it was mentioned that when Hazrat Sulaiman had come to know that she was enroute coming to him, he addressed his countries saying that he would like someone to bring her throne to him. Who was prepared to do that? A *Jinn* offered to bring it before the gathering finished. Then one of those in the court of Nabi Sulaiman ﷺ —one of those who had knowledge of the Book—offered to bring the throne before a winkling of the eyes.

Now two questions arise: What is the name of that person who had knowledge of the book? Who was he?

His name was Asif bin Barkhya and he was a special companion of Hazrat Sulaiman ﷺ. He was also a minister (*Wazeer*). Ibn Abbas says that most *Mufassireen* have accepted this as there.

The second question is: What is meant by knowledge of the Book. In this regard Maulana Hifzur Rahman Seharwy says the preferred verdict is that this person (Asif) was a Companion of Hazrat Sulaiman ﷺ and was someone very near to him; like Abu Bakr ﷺ was to Rasulullah ﷺ. Being a closed companion he knews secrets of the Torah, the Zabbur and the Divine Names of Allah. Hence when a *Jinn* offered to bring the throne before the end of the gathering, although that time limit was short enough, but Nabi Sulaiman ﷺ actually felt that service should not be delivered by a *Jinn* but by some such servant of Allah who was very near and so that though the spiritual attention of the Messenger of Allah the act be performed as a miracle before the Queen of Sheba. For this reason Asif immediately understood Hazrat Sulaiman (*Alaihis Salãm*)'s reason for asking the question and offered himself to do

the work in even shorter time. He knew that with Hazrat Sulaiman (*Alaihis Salãm*)'s attention it will be done.

Bani Israel's Accusation

Apart from other accusations laid against Nabi Sulaiman by Bani Israel, was also this that he was a sorcerer, a worker of magic by the strength of which he had become King Sulaiman ﷺ, and that through the magic he was able to subjugate men, *Jinn*, animals and birds to his will. In this regard the Qur'ãn clearly states:

> "And where there came to them (Bani Israel) an apostle from Allah, confirming what was with them, A party of the people of the Book threw away the Book of Allah behind there backs. As if (it had been something) they did not know.
>
> They followed what the evil ones gave out (falsely) against the power of Sulaiman ﷺ: the blasphemers were—not Sulaiman ﷺ, but the evil ones, teaching men magic and such thing as came down at Babylon to the angels, Harut and Marut, but none of these taught anyone such things without saying: "We are only for trial, so do not blaspheme."

They learned from them the means to sow discord between man and wife. But they could not thus harm anyone except by Allah's permission and they learned what harmed them.

Not what perfected them. And they knew that the buyers of magic would have no share in the happiness of the Hereafter. And vite was the price for which they did sell their souls, If but they knew." (2:101—103)

With regard to the story told above the *Mufassireen* have different viewpoints. In this we have chose a neutral view which is taken from the researches of Allama Anwar Shah Kashmiry. The summary of his view is this:

"When the *Shaitan* had taught Bani Israel magic and thereby led them astray, and they began to believe that the *Shaitans* were knowers of the unseen,—that was after the time of Nabi Sulaiman (*Alaihis Salãm*)'s death—while there was no Prophet of Allah among them, at such a time, as was Allah's way with Bani Israel for many centuries, Allah sent two angels from on high to show them the path of guidance. These two angels were Harut and Marut who taught Bani Israel certain secrets taken from the Divine Names end qualities in the Torah. These secrets were and the effects thereof were guide different from the unholy effects of magic and the ignorant Israel would confuse these teachings with magic, whereas in actual fact they were higher knowledge of the secrets and when these angels taught Bani Israel these arts, they advised them that now that the reality had become known to them, and they had seen the difference between truth and falsehood, if you are now going to discard the knowledge from the book of Allah and return to magic, they would surely become *Kaafir*. This is because Allah's argument and proof has been completed against them, and they will have no excuse. The Angels actually told them that their presence was a test for Bani Israel. Are they now going to follow the teachings of the Book of Allah or are they going to discard it and follow the footsteps of Shaitan.'

However the crooked ways of Bani Israel did not leave them. They used this clean higher knowledge also for their prohibited and unclean desires as for example to bring about discard and separation between husband and wife or to mix up truth with falsehood or in using the effects of some holy

phrase or sentence to acquire prohibited acts and performance. Now to do these kinds of things, the ulama state is also to be guilty of working magic or sorceny and is also prohibited acts of *Kufr*.

In other words in the above verses the Qur'ãn states that it was a false occasion of Bani Israel when they ascribed magic unto him.

Conclusion

They works of magic and teaching people magic was the work of the *Shaitans*. Nabi Sulaiman ﷺ was innocent of it. Bani Israel actually followed the *Shaitans* and thereby threw the teachings of the Book of Allah behind their backs. And even though Harut and Marut were two angels sent down to lead Bani Israel on the right path and to teach them the secrets taken from the Divine Names and attributes of Allah in the Torah, Bani Israel by following the guidance of *Shaitans*, went towards magic practices. The Qur'ãn did not mention other details and for this reason it is only compulsory upon us to believe in the description given.

Warnings and Lessons

1. The previous nations due to their own passions made various false accusations against Allah's true and chosen messengers and also laid some very bad charges against these prophets.

   In these respects Bani Israel was foremost in this. On the one hand they accepted them as prophets and at the same time they accepted them to have been guilty of various shameful and immoral acts as for example the accusation of Nabi Loot and his daughters, where Nabi Loot was accused of having been involved with an

immoral act. Similarly they even went so far as to deny the prophethood of some *Nabees* and accused them of evil-deeds as for example the matter between Nabi Dawood and Sulaiman.

The Holy Qur'ãn took up the task of clearing the prophets from those unfounded accusations and to paint *Deen* in its true colours and in this respect rejected the fabrications and false accusations in clear terms.

2. A major lesson for us is the fact that wrong path which Bani Israel chose to walk with regard to the character of the prophets and which the Qur'ãn had rejected in clear terms, we people too have not been able to keep ourselves safe and clean that and we too had begun to use those fabricated stories in our explanations. Rasulullah said on one occasion that those stories of the *Ahlul-Kitaab* which are not in against Qur'ãn and Islãmic teachings will be in order to be quoted but we have disregarded the most important condition that these stories should "not be against Qur'ãn and Islãmic teachings We have started not only to quote all manner of Israeli *Riwaayaats* but have also made them a basis for interpretation of the *Tafseer* of certain verses. The result has been that non-Muslims have even gone so far as to mention these stories as Islãmic *Riwaayaat*. Having done that they have even started to attack Islãm and used these reports as a basis for these bad intentions of theirs. On the other hand these are those torch-bearers of horesy and atheism have used those *Riwaayaat* as a means towards declaring their unbelief, and to deny the person truths of Islãm like the revival of man after death, their gathering after resurrection, paradise and hell saying unequivocally that the details which the

Mufassireen have quoted have been taken from such Israeli *Riwaayaat*. This is what they say even though we know that for those details there are clear texts.

Anyway both these ways are wrong. To give those Israeli *Riwaayaat* a place among us especially in *Tafseer* is wrong when they are against Islãmic teachings. It can be a very destructive step, no matter how good the intention behind it. Similarly it is also wrong to use these *Riwaayaat* as a means towards rejecting clear Qur'ãnic texts as that is also tantamount to misinterpretation.

The correct procedure is that opted for by the research scholars in that they have firm faith and belief in the words of the Qur'ãn and consider any heretical interpretation to be misinterpretations. Their aim is to clause the Qur'ãn from all Israeli *Riwaayaat* which are against Islãmic teachings.

3. There has always been a major difference between reports who were also kings and rulers on the one side and kings and rulers on the other side. The lives of the former were always filled with the fear of Allah, justice, invitation to truth and service to mankind . Whenever they have to show their ruling powers in cases where it needs to be shown it is done without pride and arrogance and if they have to show anger it will not be anger for their own sake but for Allah's sake. They do nothing for their own benefit—only for lifting up; the word of Allah. The whole lives of Nabi Yusuf ﷺ, Nabi Dawood ﷺ and Nabi Sulaiman ﷺ is an open exhibition of this. On the other hand the latter of the two's lives portray personal dignity, their own superiority and rank, injustice towards mankind etc.

By way of example, think of the uttering of Fir-own: "*Ana Rabbukumul A'laa.*" "I am your Lord, Most High." And then ponder over the order of Nabi Sulaiman ﷺ. *Allah ta'loo 'alayya wa'-toone Muslimeen.*" Do not present yourself in high rank before me and come to me, submitting to Allah.

In both these sentences there is the authority of a ruler but in the case of Fir-own there is rebellion against Allah, over wholming force against human beings and together with his claim to Divinity there is also much egotism. In the statement by Nabi Sulaiman there is no elevation of the self or personal aggrandisement, but there is an invitation to glorify Allah, conveying the message and a discarding of '*Shirk*'. The same difference between 'these two statements is the difference that should always be there between those who are the inheritors of the prophets and worldly rulers.

4. The person whose whole life is solely for Allah, for him Allah makes the whole world subservient to him and he becomes such that not a step as taken except in Allah's pleasure. Hence if this person performs and exhibits some such actions which are in contrast to the general laws of cause and effect of the world, then it should be known that those acts are emanating from some one who has annihilated his self in Allah's pleasure, and therefore Allah's Hands are above his head, guiding him. Some will notice these miraculous acts and still be inclined to deny and reject them. This is the path of these who are astray. The slight path is the one which the scholars of Islãm have explained in the light of the Qur'ãn and *Hadith*.

5. Of the worst effects of *Shaitani* effects is that effect and whisperings of *Shaitan* which cause discord between husband and wife leading to seperation, enmity and finally to a break-up in their relationship. This is considered to be of the worst results because it is based upon lies, false accusations, abusive language and immorality. For the reason it is something very much liked by *Shaitan*.

Hazrat Ayoob عليه السلام

Hazrat Ayoob عليه السلام *in the Qur'ãn*

In the Qur'ãn Hazrat Ayoob عليه السلام is mentioned in four *Surahs*:

(a) "And we sent inspiration in Abrahim عليه السلام, Ismail عليه السلام, Ishaaq عليه السلام, Yaqoob عليه السلام and the tribes, to Esa عليه السلام, Ayoob عليه السلام, Yunus عليه السلام, Haroon عليه السلام and Sulaiman عليه السلام."

(4:163)

(b) "We guided Nooh عليه السلام before him. And among His progeny, Dawood عليه السلام, Sulaiman عليه السلام, Ayoob عليه السلام, Yusuf عليه السلام, Musa عليه السلام and Haroon عليه السلام." (6:84)

(c) "And remember Ayyob عليه السلام when he cried to his lord: "Truly distress has seized me, But You are the Most Merciful of those that are merciful.

So we listened to him. We removed the distress that was on him. And we restored his people to him and doubled their number—as a grace from ourselves and a thing for commemoration, for all who serve us."

(21: 83—89)

(d) "Commemorate our servant Ayoob عليه السلام. Behold he cried to his Lord: "The evil one has affected me with distress and suffering."

(The command was given) "Strike with your foot. Here is (water) wherein to wash, loof and refreshing and (water) to drink."

And We gave him back his people and doubled their number—as a Grace from Ourselves and a thing for commemoration for all who have understanding.

"And take in your hand a little grass and strike therewith and break not your oath." Truly We found him full of patience and constancy.

How excellent in our service, ever did he turn to us."

(38:41—44)

In these verses the story of Nabi Ayoob ﷺ is told in very concise terms but in spite of the shortened version, still in eloquent manner the major points have been mentioned, and in correct manner as is not even found in the lengthy story told in the Book of Job.

Nabi Ayoob ﷺ was a saintly person who used to be among the prophets and messengers of Allah. The Qur'ãn says: "Remember our Servant." He used to be a wealthy person with many children who used to be very fortunate and happy.

Suddenly he was involved in a great trial and test and to come into distress in his possessions, his family and was in affliction in his body as well. His possessions became destroyed. His family perished and his body was stuck by disease. Even then too he did not complain, but bore it all with patience. He only cried to Allah: "The evil one has struck me with distress and suffering."

His respectful manner was such that he did not say: "O Allah, you have struck me with distress and suffering." He knew that although Allah is the real Doer in this world, yet disress and punishment comes as a result of *Shaitani* causes,

for this reason he says that *Shaitan* had touched him with distress and suffering. Then also in a very graceful and eloquent manner says: "*Anne Mussaniyod dur*" viz: "Affliction and suffering has touched me all round. And you are the Most Merciful one of all Merciful ones.

And when he called on Allah, Allah heard his plea and answered him. The result was that the possessions that was lost, was returned to him and the family that perished was soon replaced. For his health, a special fountain was opened up that he may wash therein and be healed: He was addressed:

> "Strike with your feet. Here is water wherein to wash, cool and refreshing and water to drink.
>
> And we gave him back his people and doubled their numbers."

And all this was done as a sign of Allah's mercy to him, and so that obedient once may take a lesson from therefrom.

Then also Allah praises Ayoob ﷺ patience and his piety by saying:

> "Truly we found him full of patience and constancy. How excellent in our service, ever did he turn to us."

A Few Points of Tafseer

1. The Stricktness of Nabi Ayoob ﷺ

In the Israeli *Riwaayaat* there was are some exaggerated reports regarding the sickness suffered by Hazrat Ayoob ﷺ. Some such kinds of sicknesses are mentioned which lead to people having aversion to them so that one tries to avoid meeting one with such sickness.

Islãmic scholars state that in view of the Qur'ãn and *Hadith* not mentioning any specific diseases, and no details, it is useless to discuss those Israeli *Riwaayaat*.

Meaning of 'Massaniyas Shaitan'

2. According to the Qur'ãn Nabi Ayoob ﷺ was to have said: "O Lord, the *Shaitan* has touched me with distress and suffering."

Islãmic scholars state that Hazrat Ayoob ﷺ uttered these words in this manner as a mark of respect. His meaning was not that he admitted that *Shaitan* had control of his body.

From Allah's side what emanates is good. And what we look upon as being bad is only bad according to our opinions because if we should consider that thing in relation to the whole affairs of this world, we are forced to consider it also as good. Our own relationships and the relationship of our deeds make some things as bad, but in reality those very things are good.

3. The Qur'ãn says: "And we gave back to him his people and doubled their number." In this verse it speaks of his people being returned to Hazrat Ayoob ﷺ. What is the meaning of that? Does it mean that after the restoration of his health Allah granted him an increase of off-spring more than what he had before that? Or does it mean that his family which had become dispersed all over were gain gathered in one place? Or does it mean that those who had already died were given new life and increased? Ibn Kathir in his *Tafseer* quoted Hasan and Qatada who explained that to have been the case. This is also the view Shah Abdul Qaudir, Imam Razi and Ibn Hibban are inclined towards the first opinion that after his health was restored, Allah granted him in the place of his perished family, other off-spring even more

than before. The verses of the Qur'ãn hold within it the possibility of both meanings.

4. In *Surah Saud* we have the verse:

"And take in your hand a little grass and strike therewith and break not your oath."

In this a reference to a special incident? The Qur'ãn and *Hadith* make no mention of any details. However the *Mufassireen* says that after all kinds of calamity had struck Hazrat Ayoob ﷺ and when there was no one else to show any sympathy to him, his pious wife was the only one who looked after him. It so happened that on one occasion, having become so heavily affected by Hazrat Ayoob (*Alaihis Salãm*)'s affliction she uttered such words which could be taken to be in contrast to Nabi Ayoob (*Alaihis Salãm*)'s patience and appeared like a complaint towards Allah. Nabi Ayoob ﷺ could not bear this and he swore an oath that he would strike her a hundred blows. When the time for his trial and affliction was expired and his health restored, the question arose as to the fulfilling of the oath which he swore. On the one side was his life-partner and her faithfulness, sympathy and good treatment and on the other side was the question of fulfilling an oath which he had sworn. He was in quite a bit of doubt and hesitation. Then Allah showed him a way out of his predicament, that he should take a hundred Salas of grass, make them into a bundle and then strike her a blow with it. That would fulfill the oath.

5. In *Surah Saud* also we have the verse: "Strike with your foot. Here is (water) wherein to wash, cool and freshing and (water) to drink."

Regarding this verse Ibn Katheer has written the following:

> "Allah ordered Hazrat Ayoob ﷺ to get up and strike his feet against the ground. When Hazrat Ayoob ﷺ did that, He opened up a fountain from the earth with water flowing from it. He washed in it and all the external disease of his body disappeared. Then he again struck his feet against the ground and another fountain opened up. He drank of its water and his internal disease disappeared. Being restored to health he praised and thanked Allah."

Hafiz Ibn Hajar also quoted something similar on the authority of Ibn Jareen Qautada.

Whether there was one fountain or two does not really matter. What matters is that Allah chose a natural way to bring back health to Hazrat Ayoob ﷺ. Even these days there are certain fountains with natural mineral waters which are used for health.

And if one washes in those waters or drinks thereof, the sickness either becomes lessened or cured. Here however the fountain opened up in a miraculous way.

Other Incidents

Imam Bukhari reports that Rasulullah ﷺ said:

"While Nabi Ayoob ﷺ was once taking a bath Allah sent down upon him a number of golden locusts. Nabi Ayoob ﷺ saw them and took a heedful and bid them in a piece of cloth. Then Allah called out to him:

> "O Ayoob ﷺ did we not grant you everything and made you prosperous and rich? What is this?
>
> Ayoob ﷺ replied: "O Lord, It is true that you have made me rich. But Lord when can a man

say he is not in need of your bounties and blessings? No one is so rich that he is not in need of your blessings?"

In expanding on the meaning of this *Hadith*, Hafiz Ibn Hajar says that Imam Bukhari in accordance with his condition is of authenticity has mentioned this *Hadith* without trying to establish any other *Mas'ala* from it .Ibn Hajar from his one side reports the *Hadith* to be completely authentic.

Hazrat Anas ﷺ reports that Nabi Ayoob ﷺ was afflicted with those calamities for a period of thirteen years until such a time when all his relation and friends chose to avoid contact with him. Only two of his relative used to continue to visit him. One day one of them said to the other." "It seems as if Ayoob ﷺ must have been guilty of a very big sin, for which he is being punished with this affliction. If it is not so then Allah would have shown mercy to him and have restored his health."

The other one related this story to Nabi Ayoob ﷺ; and it caused him great anguish and distress. He immediately fell into *Sajdah* and prayed to Allah. Thereafter he rose from his place to proceed towards where he was to relieve himself. His wife took his hand and led him. Soon thereafter the order came from Allah to strike his foot against the ground and a fountain opened up with water gushing forth. He performed ghoust and immediately appeared much better as for as health was concerned. His wife was still awaiting his return and when he came forth she could not recognise him and in fact questioned him about Ayoob ﷺ. Then he said to her: "I am Ayoob." He then related the rest of the story to her as to what happened. It is said that for his daily needs there used to be near him a small bag with wheat in it and a bag with

barley. Allah so increased his wealth that the bag with wheat became a bag of gold and the bag of barley was changed into a bag with silver.

A similar report more or less is reported by Ibn Abi Haatim from Hazrat Abdullah bin Abbaas ؓ. Sayeduna Wahab bin Munabbah relates that the period of affliction was three years where as Hasan reports it to have been seven years.

Lessons and Warnings

1. Among the certain of Allah those who are nearest to Him are being tested and tried in the harshest ways. And if they show patience and steadfastness during the trial, that test become for them a means towards gaining high ranks. Rasulullah ﷺ explained this in the following way: "As far as calamities are concerned the people tested in the hardest manner are the prophets. Thereafter the saintly pious ones and thereafter according to their ranks." *(Hadith)*

   "A man is being tested in connection the ranks of his *Deen*. Thus if in his *Deen* there is firmness and steadfastness in his *Deen* then the test too will be more severe." *(Hadith)*

2. When a person has a high position of honour, has riches and wealth and is in a good position of well-being it is not difficult to express thanks and gratitude. And if there is no pride, arrogance and egotism, it is very easy to be grateful. But in the case of calamities and hardship, sorrow, poverty and obstacles to remain satisfied and contented with Allah's judgement on your behalf without any complaint and then still to be patient and steadfast, this is a difficult task. Therefore when any person in this different position does not

discard his steadfastness and continues to be patient, then Allah's special attribute of *Rahmat* (mercy) comes into operation and Allah's blessings and mercy begins to rain over him and he becomes endowed with such bounties as are unexpected, granting him worldly as well as spiritual favours. The life of Hazrat Ayoob ﷺ is a living example of this.

"And remember Ayoob ﷺ when he cried to his lord:

Truly distress has seized me, But You are the Most Merciful of those that are merciful.

So we listened to him and removed the distress that was on him. And we restored his people to him and doubled their number. As a grace from ourselves and a thing for commemoration for all who serve us." (21:83—84)

3. A man should never despair of the mercy of Allah, because hopelessness is a sign of *Kufr* and one should not believe that calamities are only a punishment for sins committed. Very often calamities comes along by way of tests and trials and for the patient and grateful one brings Allah's mercy. In one *Hadith Qudsi* Allah addresses His servants and says:

   "I am near to the imagination of My servants."
   (*Hadith*)

In other words: I am as My servants imagine Me to be in their hearts.

4. Between a husband and a wife the most desired thing is that there should be faithfulness and steadfastness. Thus in a *Hadith* the worst of whispering which *Shaitan* loves very much is to throw suspicion between husband and wife and to spread the seeds of hatred and enmity. Hence in the *Hadith* the good news

of entrance into paradise is given to that woman who remains pious towards her husband and faithful. This faithfulness and love is more appreciated when the husband becomes involved in obstacles and calamities which can be so bad that even friends and relations choose to desert him. For this reason the pious wife of Hazrat Ayoob ﷺ had been faithful, sympathetic, obedient and stood by him in his difficult time. The result was that Allah gave Nabi Ayoob ﷺ a novel way of carrying out his oath which he took to strike her one hundred blows. This incident is enough to indicate the great appreciation and high rank of a pious wife.

5. "And remember! Your Lord caused to be declared:

   If you are grateful, I will add more favours unto you." (14:7)

   "And give glad tidings to those who patiently persevere, who say when afflicted with calamity: To Allah we belong and to Him is our return. They are those on whom descend blessings from Allah and mercy. And they are the ones who receive guidance." (2:155)

Hazrat Yunus عليه السلام

Hazrat Yunus عليه السلام *in the Qur'ãn*

In the Qur'ãn Hazrat Yunus عليه السلام is mentioned in six *surahs*: *Surah Nisaa*, *Surah An'aam*, *Surah Yunus*, *Surah al-Saffaat*, *Surah Ambiyaa* and *Surah al-Qalam*. In the first four of these only the name is mentioned and in the later two *Surahs* he is referred to as *Zun Noon* (The Man of the Fish) and *Saahibul Hoot* "the Companion of the Fish." In *Surah Nisa* and *An'aam* his name is only mentioned as him being one of the prophets whereas in other *Surahs* a little light is thrown on his history, but mention is only made of the prophetic aspect of his life which focussed on him being a bringer of spiritual guidance.

The Qur'ãn states in *Surah Yunus*:

> "Why was there not a single township (among those we warned) who believed—So its faith should here profited it—except the people of Yunus. When they believed we removed from them the penalty of ignominy In the life of the present and permitted them to enjoy their life for a while.

And further:

"And remember *Zun Noon* when he departed in wrath. He imagined that we will not cause narrowness over him. But he cried through the darkness. "There is no God but You. Glory to you. I was indeed wrong."

So we listened to him and delivered him from distress and thus do we deliver those who have faith.

And further:

"And verily Yunus was among those sent by us.

Remember when he ran away (like a slave from captivity) to the ship (fully) laden,

He agreed to cast lots and he was condemned. Then the big fish did swallow him up

And he had done things worthy of blame

Had it not been that he (repented) and glorified Allah

He would certainly have remained in side the fish till the day of Resurrection

But We cast him forth on the naked share in a state of sickness

And we caused to grow over him a spreading plant of the gourd kind. And we sent him (on a mission) to a hundred thousand or more and they believed. So we permitted them to enjoy there life for a while." (37:139—149)

And Lastly:

"So (O Muhammad) wait with patience for the command of your Lord, and be not like the companion of the fish, when he cried out in

> agony. Had not grace from His Lord reached him, he would have been cast off on the naked shore, in disgrace.
>
> Thus did his Lord choose him and make him of the company of the righteous." (68:48)

In *Surah Ambiya* Hazrat Yunus is called "*Zun Noon*" because in ancient Arabic a fish was called 'Noon' whereas in *Surah al-Qalam* he is called '*Saahib-ul-Hoot*' because '*Hoot*' is also a name for a fish. Because he had an incident with a fish in his life he is called the 'companion of the fish'.

His Lineage and Era

According to Bukhari Shareef in a report by Abdullah bin Abbaas, his father's name is mentioned as being 'Mataa.' The Christian and Jews know him as Jonah and his father as Amtay.

As for the era in which he lived, Bukhari in his *Kitaabul Ambiyaa* has placed him in the period between Hazrat Musa, Hazrat Shuaib and Hazrat Dawood.

According to Shah Abdul Qader, Hazrat Yunus was a contemporary of Hazrat Hizkeel. Ibn Hajar says it is very difficult to fix the historical era of Hazrat Yunus. Maulana Hifzur Rahman is of the opinion that the view of Hazrat Shah Abdul Qader appears to be correct. And Allah knows best.

Place of His Mission

Hazrat Yunus was chosen and sent for the guidance of the inhabitants of the famous city of Iraq—Ninewa. This was the old Assyrian capital and was near the present city of Mosul. The Qur'ãn mentions that the inhabitant of the city numbered over a hundred thousand.

His Death

Shah Abdul Qader states that Nabi Yunus ﷺ passed away in the very city to where he was sent and that he is buried there in Ninewa. This opinion is correct.

The Virtue of Yunus ﷺ

According to some *Hadith* Rasulullah ﷺ spoke very well of Hazrat Yunus ﷺ. In one *Hadith* he said: "None of you should ever say that I am better then Yunus bin Mataa."

Abu Hurairah ﷺ reports that Jew once was selling some goods. A person bought something and wanted to pay for it. The price which the Jew wanted did not suit him. He offered less. The Jew said: "I swear by Him who made Musa the best of all men, that I will never sell this thing to you for that price."

An Ansari heard this and become so angry that he smacked the Jew a blow through the face, saying: "Do you say such a thing while the prophet of Allah is among us?"

The Jew immediately proceeded to the presence of Rasulullah ﷺ to lay a complaint, saying: "O Abul Qasim, when there is an agreement between us and you, how is it that this Muslim has smacked me?"

Rasulullah ﷺ then asked the Ansari to explain the reason for the smack and as the Ansari told the story the face of Rasulullah ﷺ became red with anger.

He said: "Do not grant excellence to some prophets over others, because on the day of *Qiyaamat* when the first bugle shall be blown, every one on earth will become unconscious except those whom Allah will exempt. Then the bugle will be blown a second time and all will began consciousness. The first to wake up will be I. Then I will see Musa ﷺ standing

near the Throne of Allah. I cannot say whether be woke up before me or whether he was saved from becoming unconscious. And I cannot even say that any prophet is more excellent than Yunus bin Mataa."

In these *Hadith* Yunus is personally mentioned. In the second *Hadith* it is said: "Do not grant excellence to some prophets over others. This shows outwardly there should be no higher rank for some over others. What is the truth of this statement and its reality?

By way of clarification we quote another verse from the Qur'ãn Allah says: "Those Messengers we endowed with gifts some above others." This shown that Allah has created ranks among the prophets and messenger, some above others and some enjoy virtues above others.

Rasulullah ﷺ is reported to have said: "I am the pride of the children of Adam ﷺ. (And I say this) with out boasting."

Then on the other hand he also said:

> "Do not grant excellece to some prophets above others. And let none of you ever say I am better than Yunus bin Matta."

Now comes the question: Is there any reconciliation between these statements? The answer is this: Undoubtedly there are various ranks of excellence between the prophets and no doubt whatsoever that Rasulullah Muhammad ﷺ is the most excellent of all. But then what about his prohibition of granting excellence to some over others? The answer to this is that it is completely prohibited to grant excellence to any Nabi in such a way that the one over whom excellence is granted is made to appear inferior. In other words out of love for a specific prophet one should not praise him to such an extent that other prophets are made to look inferior. That

is something that could result in *Kufr* as is bound to happen when a debate situation arises.

Lessons and Warnings

1. With regard to the guidance of people it is Allah's *Sunnat* that when they turn their backs on the prophet's invitations and continue to reject his call, while persisting with their wrong-doing, the prophet becomes disappointed with their rejection and warns them of Allah's punishment, then in such a case there only one of two ways out of the predicement: They can either believe and declare their faith before the punishment descends upon them to save themselves from punishment. Or they can become the victims of Allah's punishment. It is not possible that they should still refuse to believe and still be saved from the wrath of Allah.

   The history of the peoples of Nooh, Saulih, Loot, Aad and Thamood etc., and other previous nations with their grand civilizations and achievement were so suddenly destroyed in spite of their great strengths and powerful structures that Allah's punishment causes them all to perish and this is adequate evidence of Allah's punishment which destroys.

2. Among the previous nations the people of Nabi Yunus is an example of a nation that declared its faith before the punishment could come over them, who became truly obedient and so was saved from punishment. If only nations coming after them decided to follow their example and so saved themselves from punishment. But this did not happen.

3. The manner in which Allah treats his prophets differs very much from His manner of Treating the ordinary person. This should be so because Allah how honoured those prophets by speaking to them directly and converting with them. Therefore the implementing of the commands of Allah is a greater responsibility upon them and they intend to do everything in accordance with revelation, especially conveying the message of truth.

Therefore which they act hastily or acts without awaiting guidance from Allah's Revelation, then even if the matter seems insignificant, Allah calls them to account in a harsh manner that those who hear about it would imaging that they were guilty of a great crime. But at the same time Allah's help stays with them and they soon show sorrow and regret, begging for forgiveness and pardon, which is soon accepted by Allah and becomes a means of increase in honour and respect.

In the style of the Qur'ãn this is a very important manner. And there who are unaware of the truth will find these kinds of incidents quite filled with anxiety, because on the one side they see Allah calling a certain personality a *Nabi* or a *Rasul*, praising him and on the other side we see that same person treated as if he is guilty of a heinous crime and sin. The causes quite a bit of confusion. For this reason it is necessary that the above point should always be kept in mind when studying the events of the prophets.

4. It is the teaching of Islãm that every *Nabi* of Allah is a *Nabi* of Islãm, irrespective to which *Deen* he belongs and as such it is necessary to believe in him just as one believes in the Prophet ﷺ is the most excellent of all prophets, it is prohibited to praise him in such a manner

that from this praising it becomes clear that one goes an inferior position to any other prophet, as often happens in the *Meelaad* gatherings.

Note: The *Tafseer* of the *Mufassireen* as regards the events of the life of Hazrat Yunus ﷺ as it appears in the Qur'ãn and the differences of opinion among them deal especially with the meanings of words and their etymology and these have not been dealt with in this discussion.

Hazrat Thul-Kifl عليه السلام

In the Qur'ãn Hazrat Zul Kifl عليه السلام has been mentioned in two *Surahs* viz., *Surah Ambiya* and in *Surah Sad*. In both cases only the name is mentioned but there is no mention of his history in short or in detail.

> "And remember Ismail عليه السلام, Idrees عليه السلام and Zul Kifl عليه السلام all (men) of constancy and patience. We identled them to our mercy for they were of the righteous ones." (21:85)

And

> "And remember Ismail عليه السلام, Yasa عليه السلام, and Zul Kifl عليه السلام each of them was of the company of Allah." (38:48)

Like in the Qur'ãn there is nothing mentioned in the *Hadith*. Therefore all we can say of Hazrat Thul Kifl عليه السلام is that he was a chosen *Nabi* of Allah and had been sent for the *Hidayat* of a special people. Even the Torah is silent on him and so also Islãmic history.

It seems that Hazrat Zul Kifl عليه السلام also belonged to Bani Israel, and no such special events are known to have happened in his life which can be a lesson or warning to others. For this reasion the Qur'ãn has sufficed to give his name and mentioned nothing above any incidents.

Hazrat Uzair عليه السلام

The Mention in the Qur'ãn

In the Qur'ãn Hazrat Uzair عليه السلام is only mentioned once in *Surah Towbah*. There is only mentioned that the Jews called him the son of God, just as the Christians called Jesus the son of God. In the Torah Hazrat Uzair عليه السلام is called Ezra.

"The Jews call: Uzair عليه السلام a son of God and the Christians call Christ the son of God. That is a saying from their mouth. (In this) they imitate what the unbelievers of old used to say.

> Allah's cause be on them; how they are deluded aware from truth." (9.30)

The Life

No detailed description is found in books of history concerning the life of Hazrat Uzair عليه السلام. The historians are however unanimous in their opinion that he is of the family of Hazrat Haroon عليه السلام bin Imraan and the preferred verdict is that he was a prophet of Allah.

So-called Son of God

About the 7th Century before Christ, *Bakhet Nasr* conquered Bani Israel and destroyed Jerusalem and

practically all of Palestine. The whole of Bani Israel was carried off as captives to Babylon. All copies of the Torah were burnt and destroyed so much so that not a single copy of it remained in the hands of the Israelites. They also had no one who knew the Torah by heart and Bani Israel was completely deprived of the Torah.

After being in captivity for a very long time, when they were set free and retained to Jerusalem once more, Hazrat Uzair ﷺ called all the Israelites together and had the Torah recited from first to the last and had it written down. Through this his position and rank among Bani Israel raised very high, so much so that it led to them even going astray. They began to believe in his as a son of God. By way of a proof of this they stated that he without any copy of the Torah wrote the whole Torah letter by letter from out of his own breast. That according to them could only have happened if he was a son of God.

The Incident Mentioned in Surah Baqarah

This story is told in *Surah Baqarah* in the following manners:

> "Or take the similitude of the one who passed by a hamlet all in ruins to its roof. He said: "Oh, how will Allah ever being it to life after its death? But Allah caused him to due for a hundred years, then raised him up again and said: "How long did you tarry?"

He said: (perhaps) a day or part of a day."

He said:

> "Nay, You have tarred thus a hundred years. But look at you food and your drink, they shown

no signs of age. And look at your donkey; and that we may make no sings of you a sign unto the people. Look further at the bones. How we bring them together and clothe them with flesh when this was shown clearly to him, he said: "I know that Allah has power over all things."

From there verses the question arises as to who that person was the whom this incident happened. The well-known opinion is that this person was Hazrat Uzair ﷺ and these reports in which Hazrat as made the person under discussion in these verse, it also states very clearly that he was nót a *Nabi* (Prophet), but a very pious person; whereas the opinion of the majority of scholars is that he was a prophet. This is so because the manner in which he is mentioned also points in that direction. Moreover in these verses the story tells of the man's conversation with Allah. That also points towards to-words him not being a pious person only but a prophet. Because of the contrasting views Maulana Hifzur Rahman Seohary after discussion the incident cause to the conclusion that the person involved in the events was Prophet Armiyah (Jeermiah).

Lessons

No matter how much spiritual progress a person makes and no matter how much nearness he acquires to Allah, that person still only remains one of Allah's servants. He never becomes Allah's son. This is the biggest deviation that a man should see such deeds emanating from a person which normally are impossible or miraculous and then to consider that person as super human and then establish a wrong belief with regard to him.

Hazrat Zakariya عليه السلام

Hazrat Zakariya عليه السلام *in the Qur'ãn*

In the Qur'ãn Hazrat Zakariya عليه السلام is mentioned in four *Surah*: *Surah Al-Imraan*, *Surah An'aam*, *Surah Maryam* and *Surah Ambiyaa*. Of these in *Surah An'aam* his name is only mentioned as being one of the prophets whereas in the other three places he is mentioned and a little of his life-history is also mentioned.

However the Zakariya عليه السلام mentioned in the Qur'ãn is not the same as the one mentioned in the Tauriat.

The Life History

1. Regarding his life history in detail very little is known about him, but from the Qur'ãn and reliable historical reports the following is known:

Hazrat Zakariya عليه السلام was a very pious preacher among Bani Israel and a well-known prophet of Allah. The Qur'ãn counts him among the list of the prophets. It says:

> "And Zakariya عليه السلام, and Yahiya عليه السلام, and Esa عليه السلام and Ilyaas عليه السلام all of them were of the righteous ones." (6:85)

2. In previous pages it was mentioned that all the prophets, whether they were kings or rulers, all used to earn there livelihood by their own hands and none of them were a burden upon the shoulders of others. Thus when any *Nabi* called his people towards guidance, he said to them:

   "I do not ask of you any reward for conveying this message. My reward is only from Allah."

Hence Hazrat Zakariya ﷺ used to earn his livelihood from carpentry as is mentioned in the *Hadith*:

3. In the family of Hazrat Zakariya ﷺ there was someone called Imran bin Naushi and his wife Hanna. They were two very pious people but had no children. In answer to the prayer of Hanna a girl was born to her whose name was given Mariyam and according an oath sworn by her. Hanna the child was offered for the service of the place of worship. There was same difference of opinion regarding who was to take care of Mariyam. Hence lots were cast and in this manner, the lot went to the name of Zakariya ﷺ,

Qur'ãn says:

"To the Cave of Zakariya was she assigned."

(3:37)

When Mariyam reached her age of understanding, Hazrat Zakariya ﷺ arranged for her a private chamber near the place of worship where she could in her own privacy remain busy with meditation and worship and from there she could go to spend the nights with her aunt, Hazrat Zakariya (*Alaihis Salãm*)'s wife.

The Qur'ãn states:

> "Every time that he [Zakariya] entered her chamber (to see her) he formed her supplied with sustenance. He said: "O Mariyam, whence comes this to you?" She said: "from Allah, for Allah provides sustenance to whom he pleases without Measure." (3:37)

Zakariya's Off-spring

Zakariya had no children and he was quite worried about the fact that his relatives, his kindred were not suited for the service of Bani Israel in guiding them towards *Hidayat*. Thus he had the desire that if only Allah would great him a pious son then he would feel at ease. However he had already reached a ripe old age and his wife was barren. Therefor he used to pray to Allah earnestly:

> "Behold he [Zakariya] cried to his Lord in secret,
>
> Praying: "O My Lord, weak indeed are my bones and the hair of my head glisteus with grey: But never have I been unblest, O my Lord many prayer to you. Now I fear what my relatives and colleagues will do after me. But my wife is barren so give me an heir from yourself.
>
> One that will truly represent me and represent the prosterity of Yakoob And make him, O my Lord, one with whom you are well-pleased. (His prayer was answered) "O Zakariya, we give you good news of a son. His name shall be Yahiya. On none by that name have we conferred distinction before."

He said:

"O My Lord, how shall I have a son? when my wife is barren and I have grown quite decrepit it from old age?"

He said: "So (it will be) the Lord says: "That is easy for Me I did indeed create you before when you had been nothing.

Zakairya ﷺ said:

"O My Lord, Give me a sign."

(The answer was) "Your sign shall be that you shall speak to no man for three nights although you are not dumb.

So Zakariya came out to his people from his chamber.

He told them by signs to celebrate Allah's praises. In the morning and the evening."

(19:2—11)

In *Surah Ambiyaa* we read:

"And remember Zakariya ﷺ when he cried to his Lord:

"O My Lord, leave me not without off-spring, though thou are the best of inheritors. So we lessened to him and granted him Yahiya ﷺ. We cared his wife's barrenness for him. These there were very quick in emulation in good works. They used to call on us with love and reverence and humble themselves before us.

(21:89—90)

And in *Surah Al-Imraan* we read:

"There did Zakariya ﷺ pray to his Lord, saying, "O My Lord, Grant unto me from you progeny that is pure. For you are.

He that hears prayer.

While he was standing in prayer in his chamber,

The Angels called out to him: "Allah gives you glad findings of Yahiya ﷺ, witnessing the truth of a word from Allah and be (besides) noble chase and a prophet.

Of the goodly company of the righteous.

He said: "O My Lord, how shall I have a son, seeing I am very old And my wife is barren?"

"Thus" was the answer "does Allah accomplish what He wills."

He said: "O My Lord, give me a sign."

"Thy Sign" was the answer "shall be that you shall speak to no man for three days but with signals.

Then celebrate the praises of your Lord again and again And glorify Him in the evening and the morning. (3:38—41)

Point of Tafsser

Regarding the events of Hazrat Zakariya (*Alaihis Salãm*)'s life the most important point in the verse wherein he is informed not to talk to people by word of month for three days. This is to as a sign from Allah that he should only converse with them by means of signs. According to Maulana Hifzur Rahman Seoharvy this means that in spite of these being no bodily impediments and his health being complete, yet for three days there was going to be hindrance in his tongue. The *Saalih*

predecessors are also agreed that he was not going to fast from speech during that time. And no one says hat he was going to become dumb during that period.

The Death of Zakariya ﷺ

With regard to the martyrdom of Hazrat Yahiya ﷺ the *Ulama* of history and biography are divided as to whether Hazrat Zakariya ﷺ had a natural death or whether he was also martyred. Two types of stories are told and strangely enough both reports are supposed to emanate from one person—Wahb bin Munabbah.

According one report by Wahb bin Monabbah it is said that when the Jews had already killed Hazrat Yahiya ﷺ, they turned towards Hazrat Zakariya ﷺ with the intention of killing him too? When Hazrat Zakariya ﷺ saw this he fled from them. Ahead of him was a big tree and he entered into a crevice of the tree. The Jews followed him. They tried to force him to come out of the crevice, by shooting arrows in his direction. When the arrow started reaching him Allah sent revelation to him: "If you are going to complain of their treatment of you, then I shall destroy this whole earth but if you are going to be patient and stead-fast then I will refrain from sending down My wrath and anger over them."

Hazrat Zakariya ﷺ chose to have patience and bore their persecution without any complaints. The Jews cut down the tree and split it into two ports and with that they also split Hazrat Zakariya ﷺ into two, killing him. The other report says that they did shoot arrows but Hazrat Zakairya ﷺ was not killed he later died a natural death.

However the well-known story is that the Jews did in fact kill him. As for how that happened and where, the best seems to say: Allah knows best.

Hazrat Yahiya عليه السلام

Hazrat Yahiya عليه السلام is mentioned in these same *Surah* of the Qur'ãn wherein his illustrious father in mentioned and in these same prayers wherein his father prayed for his coming. For example:

> "O Zakariya! We give you good news of a son His name shall be Yahiya. On none by that name have we conferred distinction before." (19:07)

The Birth of Hazrat Yahiya عليه السلام

Regarding the birth of Hazrat Yahiya عليه السلام it is known that he was about six months older than Hazrat Esa عليه السلام. It is also known that when Zakaraya عليه السلام made *Du'a* for him he also asked that he shall be a pious off-spiring. The Qur'ãn says that Allah accepted this *Du'a* and as such Hazrat Yahiya عليه السلام was a very pious and righteous person. He never married and neither did any thought of committing sin ever pass over his mind and like his father he was also one of Allah's chosen prophets. Already in his childhood Allah endowed him with knowledge and wisdom. His most excellent duty was that he gave the good news of the coming of Nabi Esa عليه السلام and he already prepared the ground with spreading guidance. The Qur'ãn states:

> "While he was standing in prayer in the chamber,

> The Angels called unto him: "Allah gives to you glad tidings of Yahiya ﷺ witnessing the truth of a word from Allah and noble, chaste and a prophet of the company of the righteous."
>
> (3:39)

Points of Tafseer

(Here Hazrat Yahiya ﷺ has been called 'Sayed'.)

1. In the biographic descriptions at this point the word 'Sayed' has been given various interpretations e.g. soft hasted, a Knower, a scholar of jurisprudence, a leader of men in worldly and spiritual affairs, "nobleman, god-fearing, well-beloved by Allah, and chosen by Allah because this last meaning is one which included all the other meanings. Hence that is the meaning taken here. (*Ibn Katheer* Vol. 2, p. 361)

2. Similarly Hazrat Yahiya ﷺ has also been described as being '*Hasoor*', i.e. one who does not even go near to women and is safe from all kinds of sins and over whose heart not even the thought of sin passes. It is one who has full control over his '*Nafs*' and keeps all passionate desires away from him.

In our opinion all these descriptions are ways of describing the same thing because etymologically 'Hasr' means to prevent and to prohibit and the word 'Hasoor' is the exaggerated from thereof. So in the above verse it means that he is one who stops the desires from every place where it should be stopped. Yahiya ﷺ is the one described as Hasoor and as such all the meanings of the word fit him.

In this task the righteoun servants of Allah have always had two ways of acting. Firstly there was the way of withdrawing from those evil and absteaction, where through

strenuous spiritual exercises efforts are made to suppress the *Nafs* and to annihilate the self. In the life of Nabi Esa ﷺ this is the way chosen, but in the case of Yahiya ﷺ Allah granted to him this quality without spiritual exercises. This was put into him from the very beginning. There was not even a chance of him committing a sin.

3. Although the first of these two ways is in itself praiseworthy, it is a way of life which is not totally suitable for man's nature and for the social life of men. Hence the prophets who chose that type of life did so for certain special reasons of the times, especially when their mission was limited to special peoples. But for the sake of congregational life the natural demand was mostly for the second method. For this reason the personal teaching of Rasulullah ﷺ and his own individual actions confirm this second method, especially since his mission was to all the world's people therefore his natural religion this should be uppermost. Hence in various faces of life Rasulullah ﷺ drew attention towards it that it is better to remain involved with worldly affairs and carry out your deen while avoiding sin than to become secluded in mountains, cares and the deserts.

Qur'ãn states:

> "(To Yahiya came the command): O Yahiya take hold of the Book with might and we gave him wisdom as a youth.
>
> And pity (for all creatures) as from us and purity He was devout.
>
> And Kind to his parents and he was not over bearing rebellious."

So peace be upon him the day he was born,

The day that he dies and the day he will be raised up to life." (19:12—15)

In these verses it says: "And we gave him knowledge and wisdom as a youth." According to a *Hadith* quoted by Ibn Katheer from Abdullah bin Mubarak this means Yahiya ﷺ in his youth already was endowed with virtue and knowledge. Those who take this verse to mean that Yahiya ﷺ was made a prophet in his childhood already have made a mistake, because the office of prophethood is a very high and important office and to give it to someone in his childhood is completely against reason and also against anything quoted from our predecessors.

4. In these verses a prayer is expressed of peace and safety. These three times are three very serious and delicate times. Firstly, the time of birth i.e., the time of emerging from the mother's womb into this world. Secondly, the time of death i.e., the time of leaving this world into the *Barzakh*, and thirdly, the time of being raised up in the time of leaving the *Barzakh* for the *Aakhirat* to receive either reward or punishment. Hence the person who has received the good news of safety and peace for these three times recives the happiness and success of both worlds.

Conveying the Message

According to an authentic *Hadith* Rasulullah ﷺ said:

"Allah command Yahiya ﷺ bin Zakariya ﷺ with five things which he should carry out and conveying to Bani Israel. Therefore he called Bani Israel together in Baitul Muqaddas and when the Mosque was full he said to them: "Allah has

ordered me to do five things that I should myself carry them out and convey them to you. The five things are the following:

Firstly, worship none except Allah and associate no one unto him. Associating anyone unto Him is like the slave of one of you whom the Master has bought with his own money and now the slave has adopted this action that whatever he earns he grants to another. Now tell me, will anyone of you like that his slave should do that. So understand that when Allah has created you, grants you sustenance, you should only worship Him and not associate anyone unto Him.

Secondly, Say your prayers with sincerity and earnestly for when in your prayers you are directed at Him alone, then Allah will continue to be directed in your direction with pleasure and mercy.

Thirdly, fast because the example of a fasting person is like him who sits among a congregation with a bag filled with Musk, because the fragrance of musk will permeate his companions. And do not pay attention to the smell emanating from the mouth of a fasting person is cleaner than the fragrance of musk.

Fourthly, take out charity from your wealth and possessions because the giver of charity is like that person whom his enemies have captured is like that person whom his enemies have captured suddenly and whose hands have been tied to his neck as they lead him to the place of execution and in that hopeless state he says:

> "Can I present money to save myself. When he finds a positive answer to his request he offers all his wealth."

Fifthly, Abundantly remember Allah by night and by day because such a person is like the one fleeing from an

enemy with the enemy on his heels and having fled he enters into a strong fortress for refuge to be safe from the enemy. Because surely, to be safe from man's enemy, '*Shaitan*' is to enter into an impregnable fortress."

There upon Rasulullah ﷺ turned towards the *Sahabah* and said: "I also command you to follow five such things which Allah has commanded me; namely, to hold fast onto the congregation, to listen and obey your leader, to migrate and to perform *Jihad* in the path of Allah. Whenever has moved outside the congregation even one step, has surely taken the yoke of Islãm from his neck.

Hence hold onto the congregation. And whosoever calls towards the things of the *Jahiliyya* has made *Jahannam* his abode. Sayeduna Haarith Ashtomy ﷺ says, "Some one asked: "O Messenger of Allah! Is it so even if that person is a regular in *Salah* and *fasting*."

Rasulullah ﷺ replied: "Yes, even if he is a regular performer of *Salah* and *fasting* and believes that: I am a Muslim still will his punishment be *Jahannam*."

(*Al-Bidaya wal-Nihayah*, Vol. 2, page 52)

Ibn Asakir ﷺ has quoted some reports by Wahb bin Munabba ﷺ that Hazrat had such fear for Allah that he was almost always crying so that on his checks there were signs of the tears flowing. Therefore when once his father searched for him in the desert and found him, he said to him:

> "O My Son We are worried about you, searching for you, while you are here crying and lamenting."

Yahiya ﷺ replied:

> "You have informed us that between *Jannat* and *Jahannam* there is a desotate plain which no

one will be able to cross without the shedding of tears out of fear for Allah and without that one will not reach *Jannat*." When Hazrat Zakariya ﷺ heard this he also started crying.

(Al-Bidayah wal-Nihayah)

The Story of His Martyrdom

When Yahiya ﷺ began to call people to the *Deen*, he also told them that after him a bigger and more illustrious prophet was going to appear, the Jews started bearing hatred and enmity towards him. They could not tolerate his preaching and one day they gathered around him and asked him: "Are you the Massiah?" He replied: "No" Then they said to him: "Are you that prophet?" He replied: "No" Then they asked him: 'Are you Eliah ﷺ, the prophet?" He replied: "No" Then they all asked him: "Then, who are you? Who preach to us like this and call thus?" He replied: "I am the voice of him who calls in the desert, who has been raised up for the truth."

Hearing this the Jews rose up in anger and in the end killed him.

The Place of Martyrdom

Regarding the place of his martyrdom there is no certain evidence us to where it happened. But this is certain that the Jews were the killers. In the Qur'ãn in various places there is mention of the Jews' Killing of the Prophets (*Alaihis Salãm*).

The Night of Maeraaj

In Bukhari's, *Kitabul Ambiyaa*, Imam Bukhari only mentioned a piece of the *Hadith* of the Maeraaj in which is stated that Rasulullah ﷺ met him in the second heaven: The *Hadith* states:

Thus when I reached the second heaven I saw Yahiya ﷺ and Esa ﷺ; they are both cousins. Jibrael ﷺ said to me: "These are Yahiya and Esa (*Alaihimus Salãm*) Great them:

I greeted them and they both answered me greeting back. They both said: "May your name be blessed! O righteous brother and pious prophet.

Warnings and Lessons

1. There Cannot be anyone more wretched and unfortunate then that person who kills such a saintly personality who neither troubles him nor tries to take away his wealth and possessions. In fact without asking for any payment he strives to rectify lives and serves them in their character building, their actions and there beliefs in such a manner that it is to their benefit in this world and the hereafter.

2. Though Allah's grace an person should never give up hope and even if at times he prays to Allah with sincerity and his aim is not reached it does not mean that Allah has turned away from him. Some times Allah in His Knowledge knows that certain things for which a man prays can be harmful to him, which of course that person does not know due to his limited knowledge. And sometimes for the sake of the general benefit of all it is required that a person's individual benefit should be postponed.

In any case to give up hope for Allah's grace and bounty is definitely not a praiseworthy thing:

> "Do not despair of the Mercy of Allah. Verily only such ones give up hope for the Mercy of Allah, who are non-believers." (12:87)

The As-Habul—Jannah

The As-Haabul Jannah and the Qur'ãn

In the Qur'ãn in *Surah al-Qalam* the Qur'ãn gave an example with regard to the people of Makkah.

> "Verily We have tried then as we tried the people of the Garden when they resolved together the fruits of the Garden In the morning.
>
> But made no reservation (If it be Allah's will).
>
> Then there came on the Garden a visitation from their hard (which swept away) all round while they were asleep.
>
> So the (garden) became by the morning.
>
> Like a dark and desolate spot.
>
> (whose fruits had been gathered).
>
> As the morning broke they called out one to another.
>
> Go you to your tilth in the morning
>
> If you would gather the fruits

So they departed conversing in secret low tones (saying),

"Let not a single indigent person break in upon you into the garden this day.

And they opened the morning strong in an unjust resolve.

But when they saw the garden, they said:

"We have surely lost our way."

Indeed we are shut out (of the fruits of our labour).

Said one of them: Mere just than the rest:

Did I not say to you why not Glorify Allah.

They said: Glory to our lord. Verily we have been doing wrong."

Then they turned one against another in reproach.

They said: "Allah for us. We have indeed transgressed."

It may be that our lord will give us in exchange A better garden than this.

For We do turn to Him in repentance.

Such is the punishment in this life but greater is the punishment in the Hereafter

If only they knew. (68:17—33)

Opinions Concerned

Hazrat Abdullah bin Abbaas ﷺ says this is just a parable to show how the people of Makkah were. It is not an actual event which took place. Hazrat Saeed bin Jubayr ﷺ says it is

an event which happened at a village in Yemen called Darwaan which is situated about six miles from San'aa.

Now whether this is a happening or just a parable, the Qur'ãn has taken an lesson from it to serve as a warning. It tells of the disobedience of Quraish and their rejection of Sayeduna Rasulullah ﷺ and especially refers to the evil deeds of one of their leaders Waleed bin Mugheera. Now by relating this story it says that planning against the Messenger of Allah and to disregard the teachings of the Qur'ãn regarding the rights of Allah and the rights of men, and to continue to degrade and insult the Messenger of Allah and the Muslims—will lead to the same result as happened to these people who were the people of the garden. This is so because Allah has a law whereby He grants respite to even sinners with the aim of them coming to their senses. But when such respite is granted and someone fails to take advantage thereof or takes it as a sign that he is on the right path, then suddenly Allah's punishment will come and surprise him and destroy him. Then he will be a lesson for others and no amount of regret will be beneficial.

Lessons

Allah created this universe and in it for man in which to live his congregational social life with others. And he has made man's needs so intertwined among themselves that this factory of life is unable to function without mutual co-operation and because a collective life is made up of individual lives it is necessary that for the growth and continuance of life on earth that such laws should be fixed through which to ensure mutual brotherhood and love, and to ensure that discord and hatred not exist. Therefore in order to perfect the system, Allah has for the social life fixed two

sets of rights viz the right of social life and the various ranks of society.

The first one is the *Haqq* of *Ma'eeshat*. The right to a livelihood. This law states that in this world every living being has a right to life and none may be deprived of it. It is the right of every person individually. In this respect all living beings are equal and no one has superiority over another.

The second on is the various ranks of life. It is right that each one should have it but it is not necessary that everyone should receive the same.

Allah says:

> "Allah has bestowed His gifts of sustenance more freely on some of you then on others."
> (16:71)

However the difference in ranks of livelihood and the giving of more or less to some does not mean that whatever a person earns or receives is his own individual possession, but the more a person earns so much also will be the rights of Allah and the rights of men on it. He who considers it has individual right and reject the rights of others in it, then too it will not be good for him and he may find himself the earner of Allah's wrath.

The Story of the Believer and the Unbeliever

In *Surah Kahf* after telling the story of the Inmates of the Cave, Allah tells another story concerning two persons who had a debate like conversation between them. Than it follows what happened between tham and also tells the result of the story. At the end the one of them was successful while the other one had to end up with regret and sorrow. The manner in which the Qur'ãn tells the story, nothing more is found in the books of history and *Hadith*. Here is the story as told in *Surah Kahf*:

> "(O Prophet) recite this parable (to the prophet) a parable of two men for one of them We provided two gardens of grape-vines and surrounded them with date palms. In between the two We placed cornfields.
>
> Each of those gardens brought forth its produce and failed not the least there in
>
> In the midst of them We caused a river to flow.

> (Abundant) was the produce this man had. He said to his companion in the course of a mutual argument: "More wealth have I than you.
>
> And more honour and power in (my following of) men."
>
> He went into his garden in a state (of mind) unjust to his soul.
>
> He said: "I deem not that this will ever perish
>
> Nor do I deem that the hour will come
>
> God even if I am brought back to my Lord, I shall surely find (there) something better in exchange.

His companion said to him in the course of the argument with him:

> "Do you deny Him who created you out of dust
>
> Then out of a sperm drop, then fashioned you into a man?"
>
> But (I think) for my part that He is Allah, My Lord,
>
> And none shall I associate with my Lord.
>
> Why did you not, as you into the garden, say: "Allah's will be done."

There is no power but with Allah. If you see me less than you in wealth and sons. It may be that my Lord will give me something better than your garden and that he will send on your garden thunder bolts (by way of reckoning) from heaven making it but shippery sand!

> "Or the water of your garden will run off underground

> So that you will never be able to find it."
>
> So his fruils (and enjoyment) were encompassed with ruin,

And he remained twisting and turning his hands over what he had spend on his property when had now tumbled to pieces to its very foundations. And he would only say:

> Woe is me! Would I had never ascribed partners to my lord and Chrisher."
>
> Nor had he numbers to help him against Allah
>
> Now was he able to deliver himself
>
> There the only protection comes from Allah the true One
>
> He is the Best to reward and the best to give success." (18:32—44)

Commentary on this Event

Before these verses it was mentioned that those who reject Allah for them will be hell-fire. And for those who are believers for them will be all kinds of happiness and the everlasting garden of paradise. Thereafter in the verses under discussion this may be said that for those who reject Allah it will not only be that they will be deprived of the hereafter alone, but very soon they will soon be suffering losses in this world and misfortunes. Their imagination that they are in possession of all comforts and pleasures and that they are possessors of worldly riches and that they are strong, these thoughts will soon be destroyed. And the believer should not be discouraged by his present state of poverty because soon the time will be there when his condition will be changed a state of honour and well-being. Moreover worldly

comforts is a moving shadow and to put faith therein is useless. When destruction comes over it does not take long and then no power on earth can save it.

This story, whether it is an actual happening or a parable, which is related for the sake of being a warning, is an almost perfect example of the confrontation between the *Mushrikken of Makkah* and the Muslims. It points towards the object state of poverty among the Muslims on the one side vis-a-vis the comparative better position of the Makkans and gives them a warning of the turn-about that was to follow.

Lessons

1. Worldly favours and bounties are only temporary and mere passing things. Therefore any intelligent passion will refrain from becoming proud and arrogant over them and not become disobedient to Allah on account of them. They should at all times remember the tales of the powers of Fir'own, Namrud, and Thamood and bear in mind that the results of their actions can be seen until today.

   "Travel in the land and see what was the end of these guilty of sins." (27:69)

2. True honour lies in *Imãn* in Allah and righteous deeds. The honour is not acquired through wealth, riches and worldly high rank: Note that Quraish of Makkah possessed sufficient worldly goods and worldly authority but at the battle of Badr the *Deeny* and worldy humiliation they suffered could not be turned away. The Muslims on the other hand were deprived of all forms of worldly comforts but when their *Imãn* in Allah and righteous deeds gave them worldly as well as spiritual dignity and honour, no one could prevent it.

Qur'ān says:

> "But honour belongs to Allah And His Messenger and to the believers but the hypocrites do not know." (63:8)

3. A believer is such that when Allah endows him with His bounties, then instead of arrogance and pride, he puts his head on the ground and admits those bounted and with his tongue and heart declares: O Allah, if you did not grant these gifts, it would have been beyond my power to acquire them. These gifts are from your side."

The believer told his friend: "And why is it that when you entered your garden you did not say *Ma Sha'allah Laa Qoowwata Illa Billah.*"

According to an authentic *Hadith*, Rasulullah ﷺ said: "At treassure from among the treasures of paradise is *Laa howla walaa qoowata illaa billah.*"

"One of the treasures of paradise is to admit and recognise that the power to do any good deed and the strength to avoid the doing of any evil deed is impossible without the help of Allah.

In other words the person who admit this with his tongue and has made this reality in his heart, is as if he has acquired one of the Keys to the Treasures of paradise.

4. Fortunate indeed is the man who ponders over the results of an action before the result becomes a fact. And the unfortunate one is he who without thinking about the result, shows arrogance and pride and later on when the results appear, he is sed over the results and shows sorrow and regret. At that time sorrow and regret one of no use. In the story above (or as we may

say in the parable) the rejector was faced with that state of misfortune. And the same day of ill-fortune had to be seen by Firown and he too was forced to say at that moment that if, before the arrival of the punishment, he had lisened to the advice of Nabi Musa ﷺ he would not have had to see the punishment.

The As-Haabul Qaryah

THE COMPANIONS OF THE CITY
THE COMPANIONS OF SURAH YASEEN

The As-Haabul Qaryah in the Qur'ãn

In the Qur'ãn a very short story is told a *Surah Yaseen.* Because of this the people concerned are known also as the 'People of *Surah Yaseen*', and according to the sequence in which they are mentioned they are known as the '*As-Haabul Qaryah*'. In the Qur'ãn the story is told thus:

"(O Prophet) tell them the story of the companions of the Qaryah, when Allah's Messenger came to them when we (first) sent to them two messengers they rejected them, but We strengthened them with a third, they said:

> "Truly we have been sent on a mission to you."
>
> The people said: "You are only men like ourselves."
>
> But Allah Most Gracious sen no sort of revelation

You do nothing but lie.

They said: "Our Lord knows that we have been sent on a mission to you.

And our duty is only to proclaim the clear message."

The people said: "For us, we augur an evil omen."

From you if you desist not. We will certainly stone you

And a grievous punishment will indeed by inflicted on you by us."

They said:

"Your evil omen are with yourself.

(Deem you this an evil Omen) if you are admonished?

Nay, but you are a people transgressing all bounds."

Then there came running from the farthest past of the city

A man saying: "O My people, obey the messengers.

Obey these who ask no reward of you (for themselves)

and have themselves received guidance.

It would not be reasonable in me if I did not serve Him

Who created me. And to whom you shall all be brought back?

Shall I take other gods besides Him? If Allah Most Gracious should intend some adversity for me, of no use

whatsoever will be their intercession for me, nor can they deliver me.

> I would indeed, If I never to do so, be in manifest error.
>
> For me, I have faith in the lord of you (all)
>
> Listen, then, to me!"
>
> It was said: Enter you the garden."
>
> He said: "Ah me! would that my people knew (what I know)
>
> For that my Lord has granted me forgiveness
>
> And has enrolled me among those held in honour!"
>
> And we did not sent down against his people, after him
>
> Any hosts from heaven nor was it useful for us to do so.
>
> It was no more than a single mighty blast
>
> And behold they were (like ashes) Quenched and silent." (36:13—29)

There is so much difference of opinion about the above incidents among the *Mufassireen* and the historians that it is almost impossible to fix accurately the time and place of the events. But we can say this that a major object of the Qur'ãn is to provide admonition and lessons of warning and by telling this story, has provided adequate food for thought for the one who has any amount of insight. On this earth numerous incidents have already take place in the struggle between truth and falsehood, and this seems like another of these, to be joined with the events which happened during the era of Nabi Nooh ﷺ and his people, Nabi Hood ﷺ,

and the people of Aad, Nabi Saulih ﷺ and the people of Thamood, as well as Ibraheem ﷺ, Nabi Loot ﷺ, Nabi Musa ﷺ and his people and Esa ﷺ and Bani Israel.

The story tells of a few saintly messengers came to try to show a specific people to follow the right path, but these people out of stubbornness refused to listen to them and to obey. They did not even desist from killing these messengers. How many times did his same type of events not repeat itself among Bani Israel.

Opinions Regarding these Events

Ibn Ishaaq ﷺ relates on the authority of Sayeduna Kaab Ahbaar ﷺ and Wahb bin Munabbah ﷺ that these events happened in the city of Antioch in Syria. The people used to be idol worshippers and their king was someone called Antakhees. Allah sent three messengers with a message of *Hidayah* to them. They were, Saudiq, Sadooq and Shaloom. The third one who came along from the furthest end of the city was called Habeeb. This Habeeb is reported to have been a saintly and ascetic pious worshiper of Allah who busied himself with *Ibaadat* in his part of the town. Another opinion is that he used to manufacture silken and yarn material and a man well-known for charitable works. In their opinion this was an event from the era of Nabi Esa ﷺ, whatever the details of the story, it serves as an admonishment and warning for others, especially the people of Makkah.

Lessons

1. The people of falsehood have ways had this idea that a messenger of Allah should be someone above nature and not a human being. This belief is based upon stupidity because in view of the fact that man lives on

this earth it is only logical that for his guidance on earth the messenger should be a human being.

2. Wherever the traces of evil and corruption are in abundance, there too the spirit of righteousness and good fortune will also show itself and in the field of helping the truth will show its courage.

3. The more the truth begins to shine brightly, the forces of evil will also become more and more prevalent and instead of bringing forth sound arguments will become inclined towards war and violence, but the haugers-on of the truth will not mind that and be prepared to sacrifice their life for the truth.

Hazrat Luqmaan

Hazrat Luqmaan or as he is also known as "the wise man, Luqmaan" is a very well-known personality among the Arabs. However, regarding the details of his life only so much is known that he was a very wise person and his words of wisdom was well-known, but as regards the other details of his life, there are many opposing opinions.

The Holy Qur'ãn and Hazrat Luqmaan

The Holy Qur'ãn has made mention of Hazrat Luqmaan and by virtue of this the specific *Surah* has been named *Surah Luqmaan.* Although at this place too no details has been mentioned about his family and lineage, his advisory words of advice are mentioned which also throws light upon the type of personality he was. Therefore after mentioning those words we shall Judge as to which of the two opinions about him seems more correct. Qur'ãn says:

> "We bestowed wisdom on Luqmaan. Show your gratitude to your Lord." Anyone who is grateful does so to the profit of his soul.
>
> But anyone is ungrateful, verily Allah is free of all wants worthy of praise.

Behold Luqmaan said to his son by way of instruction:

"O my son, join not in worship (others) with Allah for false worship is indeed the highest wrong-doing.

And we have enjoined on man to be good to his parents

In travail upon travail did his mother bear him,

And in years twain was his wearing: (hear the command):

Show gratitude to Me and to your parents

To Me is your final Goal.

But if they strive to make you join in worship with Me that of which you have no knowledge, obey them not; yet bear them company in this life with justice (and consideration) and follow the way of these who turn to me in love

In the end the return of you all is to me and I will tell you the truth and meaning of all that you did."

"O My son, (said Luqmaan), If there be but the weight of a mustard sed and if it were hidden in a rock or anywhere else in the heavens or on earth, Allah will bring it forth. For Allah understands the finest mysteries and is well-acquainted with them.

"O My son establish regular prayers, enjoin what is just and forbid what is wrong.

And bear with patiente constancy whatever betide you, for this is firmness (of purpose) in (the conduct of) affairs.

And swell not your check for pride at men.

Nor walk in insolence through the earth:

For Allah loves not any arrogant boaster.

And be moderate in your pace and lower your voice for the harshest of sounds without doubt is the braying of the ass." (31:12—19)

In these verses Hazrat Luqmaan gave his son these words of wisdom.

1. Handle people with the best character and let it not be so that out of pride you turn your face away from them.
2. Do not walk proudly in the land because does not like one who acts with pride and arrogance.
3. At all times act with the utmost humility.
4. When speaking to people keep your voice soft. It is not the work of a human being to shout at people, because if shouting in a loud voice had been a likable thing, the voice of an ass would have been likeable. Whereas we know it is considered of the most hated voices.

A Man of Wisdom

Although according to one report Hazrat Luqmaan is mentioned as having been a prophet, the manner in which he is mentioned in the Qur'ãn seems to indicate that it is not so. And there is not one sentence that indicates in the direction of him being a prophet. Hence it is the opinion of the majority of *Ulama* that Hazrat Luqmaan was a saintly man and a man of much wisdom.

A Few Points Pertaining to Tafseer

1. The first point of advice Hazrat Luqmaan gave his son was to avoid all '*Shirk*' and to hold onto the oneness of Allah. He called '*Shirk*' the '*Zalmoen Azeem*'—a 'great deed of evil and injustice.' Actually in the true religion this is that thing which diffentiates between an upright Muslim and a *Mushrik*. And '*Shirk*' is that sin for which there can be no pardon except through repentance.

2. In *Surah Luqmaan* from '*Wa ith-qaula Luqmaanu*' until '*Lazulmun atheem*' and from '*Yaa bunayya*' up to '*La soutul Khameer*' the words of Hazrat Luqmaan, are quoted. In between we have the sentence starting: '*Wa wassaynal*' upto '*bima Kuntum taa'lamoon*' which is an interposing sentence wherein Allah's word is mentioned.

   It is as if Allah found it necessary to inform this *Ummat* that after having recognised Allah as your overlord, it is of the utmost importance that one should treat one's parents with good behaviour, kindness, respect and service. One should at all times try to let their happiness and pleasure be uppermost in one's mind and even if they are non-Muslims, then too it is required that they should be well-treated with humility and sincerity. However, if they insist on turning away from the true religion, then they should not be followed in this because to obey them in what is disobedience to Allah is not-right as Rasulullah ﷺ said: "Let there be no obedience, towards a human being in what is sin against the creator. But even in this too one should act with softness and gentleness, and one should speak to them in kindly terms.

3. In the advice Hazrat Luqmaan gave his son he laid emphasis on good character and humbleness while advising against arrogance, pride, bad manners. He mentioned these things in particular because in this world the root of all bad things and root of all good things are these qualities. That is why Rasulullah ﷺ also advised *Ummat* against the evils and inculcated those qualities.

4. Hazrat Luqmaan also advised his son not to speak harshly or in a rough voice because speaking in gentle terms is part of good character while hardsness of speech in a part of bad character. Therefore such speech has been likened to the voice of asses.

5. Hazrat Luqmaan also advised his son not to walk arrogantly on the earth this same theme the Qur'ãn has also mentioned in a striking manner in *Surah Bani Israel*:

> "Not walk on the earth with insolence for you cannot rend the earth a sunder nor reach the mountains in height." (17:37)

The opposite of that is the walk of the good men of character:

> "And the servants of the Most Merciful One are these who walk on the earth in humility and when the ignorant address them they say: "peace!" (25:63)

The Wisdom of Luqmaan

In previous lines it was mentioned that among the Arabs the wisdom of Luqmaan was quite famous and his words of wisdom were always quoted in their gatherings. Hence in this

respect quite a few of his sayings were quoted by the *Tabi'een* and over by Rasulullah ﷺ. Some of them are as follows:

1. Wisdom makes a poor man a king.
2. When you enter a gathering, first greet and then take a seat on one side. And until such time that you have not heard their conversation, do not start talking. Thus if they are busy with Allah's *Zikr*, then you too take your share of it and if they are busy with nonsensical talk, then remove yourself from that gathering and search for a better gathering.
3. When Allah has made you a trustee then it is the duty of the trustee to look after and protect the trust.
4. O My Son, fear Allah and do not make a show of your fear for Him that people may honour and respect you, because in such a case your heart is actually a great sinner.
5. O My Son, do not have friendship with an ignorant one, because he may think that you like his ignorant ways. And do not show any lack of concern for the anger of a wise one test he should decide to break off relations with you.
6. Remember that on the tongues of wise ones in Allah's power. They do not speak anything else except that Allah wants things done this way or that way.
7. O My Son, through silence you will have to feel sorrow and regret and if speech is silver, then silence is gold.
8. O My Son avoid anger because great anger kills the heart of a wise one.
9. O My Son, speak pleasurable words, have a pleasurable temperament. Then you will in the eyes of people be

so beloved just as the one who acts charitably towards them.

10. Gentleness is the root of wisdom.

11. Whatever you sow, you will reap.

12. Love your friend and the friend of your father.

13. Someone asked Hazrat Luqmaan: who is the most patient person?

    He replied: That person after whose patience there is no harm or injury.

    Then they asked him: "Who is the greatest scholar?

    He replied: "That person who increases his knowledge through the knowledge of others.

    Then he was asked: "Which man is the best?"

    He replied: "The rich man."

    Then the questioner asked: "Does that mean the one with wealth?"

    He replied: No, the rich man is that one who looks for good within himself and find it. Otherwise he considers himself independent of others."

14. Some one asked him: Which man is the worst man?

    He replied: "He is that one who is unconcerned that people should him among evil and consider him a bad person."

15. O My Son, let there always be righteous ones around you table cloth that is best and only consult with the true *Ulama* for advice.

Preaching

1. A man, if he is not a *Nabi* and only a man of wisdom, his rank with Allah is still very high indeed. That is why Sayeduna Luqmaan received this special honour that Allah described him in the Qur'ãn and quoted some of his valuable advice. For this *Ummat* and so much was he honoured that a special *Surah* is named after him.

2. '*Shirk*'— Associating someone or something to Allah is such a thing which destroys all good deeds making a man to appear before Allah with empty hands. That is why a person should endeavor his utmost to avoid it completely.

   Hidden *Shirk* like open *Shirk* also eats up a man's good deeds, just like a fire eats up wood. And in the field of hidden *Shirk* we have evils like doing things for show to others, and for love of fame and name.

3. Good conduct and behavior to parents has been given such importance in Islãm because the Queen puts them in the rank of our metaphonical lords. To serve them with honour and to be humble before them irrespective of whether they are Muslims or non-Muslims has been declared obligatory. In various places in the Qur'ãn good relations with parents has been mentioned just after worship of Allah, before mentioning any others rights to others. So much emphasis is laid on this that in the *Hadith* it is even said: "Paradise lies under the feet of mothers."

   (*Nisai Shareef*)

The As-Haab-e-Sabbath

Prohibition of the Sabbath Day

Hazrat Ibraheem ﷺ had fixed one specific day of the week especially for the worship of Allah of the seven days he fixed Friday. During the era of Hazrat Musa ﷺ of Bani Israel, due to their crookedness demanded from him that the day for worship should be changed to Saturday.

Initially Hazrat Musa ﷺ advised them to desist from this demand and to continue on the line fixed by Hazrat Ibraheem ﷺ. However when they insisted upon their demand Allah informed Hazrat Musa ﷺ through revelation that He had acceded to their request and Saturday becamse the day of worship. Hence they should now honour and respect this day and its sanctity. Now it will be prohibited for them to do any baying, selling, farming, trading and hunting.

The Qur'ãn in very few words referred to this difference of opinion which they had with Hazrat Musa ﷺ. It says:

> "Surely the *Sabbath* was only made strict for those who disagreed (As to its observance): And

> Allah will judge between them on the day of judgement as to their differences." (12:124)

Therefore Nabi Musa عليه السلام in the matter of fixing the *Sabbath* made a covernment with his people:

> "We commanded them: "Transgress not in the matter of the *Sabbath*."
>
> And We took from them a solemn covenant. (4:154)

From the time of Nabi Musa عليه السلام to a long time afterwards a group from Bani Israel came to settle on the coast of the Red Sea. There they used to live from the fish cought there, and the selling of the fish. They used to catch fish for six days of the week and on the seventh day they used to spend the day in the worship of Allah. The result was that for six days the fish used to hide themselves and on the seventh day they were seen swimming about freely. In this way Allah was testing Bani Israel and testing the strength of their faith and their obedience. It became even move difficult getting hold of fish on the six fishing days while on the seventh day there was an abundance of fish to be seen.

For some days these Jews used to be patient, looking at this situation. But soon some of them could not bear it any more and started inventing plans to circumvent the ban on fishing on the *Sabbath*. Some of them used to dig big holes near the sea and also dug such sluits that led to these holes. This was done on the Friday and as the fish appeared on the *Sabbath* day with the rising of the water, the sea water used to reach those holes through the sluits which were like channels. In the manner the fish landed in the holes to be taken out of there the next day i.e. Sunday.

Some others among them again used to spread their fishing nets into the water as well as their hooks. Fish used to be caught in these nets and were taken out the Sunday after the *Sabbath* was over. They were quite pleased with these plans. When their *Ulama* and sincere good fearing ones used to prohibit them from these actions, they simply said that Allah had prohibited fishing on the *Sabbath* and that they are not fishing on that day but on the Sunday. Even through their hearts and minds were telling them it was wrong but because of there crooked temperament they were telling themselves that this plan was okay with Allah.

In actual fact they were not actually acting according to the law. This was a deceitful plan devised to by pass Allah's commands. It was a plan of deceit and fraud with which they themselves went astray, trying also to mislead others. Others followed them and so it happened that a larger group of them who acted against the law of the Sabbath. Seeing this a group of God-fearing souls took courage and tried their utmost to get them to stop these acts. However they would not heed the appeal. Then this group got divided into two groups: One group said it was useless to try to get them to stop. They will not listen. If they had considered it a sin there was still a chance of getting them straight. But seeing that they have devised these means of making some thing which is heaven into something lawful, you can be sure that Allah's punishment will be near.

The other group felt it was their duty to call upon the wrong-doers to desist right upto to the end. However they did not heed and this group still did not lose hope at all. There was still the chance that they would receive the help of Allah and terminate their bad deeds.

In the case those who happened to break the sanctity of the *Sabbath* through their deceitful plans, continued to

do so, paying no attention to the words of advice given to them. Initially Allah gave them a chance of mending their ways but at last Allah's punishment descended on them. In the same manner that they had through their plans managed to change Allah's commands, He changed their outward appearances and through a simple order, of "Be", They were transformed into apes end swine. Immediately they were deprived of the honour of being human beings and became an admonition and a lesson and warning for others after them.

The *Mufassireen* say that when the one group, who always used to preach to them to desist from those prohibited acts, saw that the stubborn and disobedient ones were not inclined to stop their deeds of disobedience, they cut of all relations with them, stopping all social contact with them like eating and drinking with them and went so far as to close their doors to them to avoid any kind of intercourse with them. Thus when an a certain day Allah's punishment descended on them, these people for several hours did not come to know of it. But when after some time they noticed no movements from their side, they went to investigate and instead of people, they found apes and swine in their places. They said to them: "Did we not warn you of this terrible punishment.

Like animals they shook their heads to admit while tears were streaming from their eyes in sorrow. The Qur'ãn states:

> "And well you knew these among you who transgressed in the matter of the *Sabbath*:
>
> We said to them: "Be apes despised and rejected."
>
> So we made it an example to their own time and to their posterity

And a lesson to those who fear Allah. (2:65—66)

The Qur'ãn also said:

"(O Prophet) Ask then concerning the town standing close by the sea.

Behold they transgressed in the matter of the *Sabbath*.

Their fish did come to them openly holding up their heads.

But on the day they had no *Sabbath*, they Came not:

Thus did We make a trial of them for they were given to transgression.

When some of them said: "Why do you preach to people

Whom Allah will destroy or visit with a terrible punishment

Said the preachers: "To discharge our duty to your Lord

And perchance that they may fear Him.

When they disregarded the warnings that had been given then,

We rescued those who forbade evil.

But we visited the wrongdoers with a previous punishment because they were given to transgression.

When in their insolence they transgressed all prohibitions

We said to them: "Be apes, despised and rejected." (7:163—166)

Qur'ãn also says:

> "O you people of the Book, believe in what we have (non) revealed Confirming what was already with you
>
> Before We changed the face and fame of some (of you) beyond recognition,
>
> Before We changed the face and fame of some (of you) beyond recognition,
>
> And turned them hindwards or curse them as we cursed the *Sabbath* breakers, for the deasior of Allah most be carried out. (4:47)

Which Town

Which town was it where this incident took place. The Qur'ãn merely points out that it was situated on the sea shore. The *Mufassireen* have given various names for the city. One opinion is that the city was called Eliyah. Which is situated on the Red Sea. Arab geographers point out that when one passes Mount Sinai en route to Egypt, this town comes on the way by the sea shore. Or if Egyptians travel to Makkah they pass this town.

Maulana Hifzur Rahman have preferred this opinion as most acceptable.

The Era of this Incident

From style of the Qur'ãn and the eminent *Mufassireen* it seems that the incident of the As-Haabul *Sabbath* happened during the period between Hazrat Musa and Hazrat Dawood about the year 1100 B.C. at such a time when there was no prophet in the town of Eliyah. That is

why the Qur'ān only mentioned them and not the name of any *Nabi*. The duty of inviting to the good and prohibiting evil was then the responsibility of the local *Ulama*.

Some Important Points of Tafseer

1. In *Surah Baqarah* in the story of the As-Haabul *Sabbath* mention is also made of "the people around them". Who are these people? There are various opinions but the most acceptable opinion is hat it refers to the people living in the towns and villages around Eliyah.
2. In *Surah al-Maidah* (5:60) it states that they were changed into the shapes of apes and swine. Hazrat Abdullah bin Abbaas ﷺ says that of the people on whom the punishment descended, the young people were changed to apes while the elder ones were changed to swine.

Reality of this Transformation

What is the meaning of transforming men into apes and swine? The majority of scholars believe this was a real transformation physically.

The Result of the Transformed People

There is a *Hadith* in Musnad Ahmad that transformed people who were made into apes and swine did not live for longer than there days. In other words the transformation brought about such changes in their bodies and constitutions that they could not survirt and died soon after.

Lessons

1. To invite to the good and prohibit the wrong is a very important duty and the mission of the *Ambiya* (*Alaihimus Salãm*) is to fulfil this responsibility. When there is no prophet or Messenger of Allah alive, the duty falls upon the shoulders of the *Ulama*. Therefore the Qur'ãn and the *Hadith* have put much emphasis on the duty, promising great reward for those who carry out this duty and warns against discarding it or neglecting it.

2. One of the greatest evils a man can be involved with is to try and avoid or circumvent Allah's commands by inventing such plans to make the *Haraam* things *Halal* or to make *Halal* things *Haraam*. For this reason Rasulullah ﷺ emphasised to this *Ummat* never to get involved with that kind of acts.

3. In the delivering of any duty one should not care as to whether the one for whom an action is being performed accepts it or not.

The As-Haabul Ras

630 B.C.

The word 'Ras' devotes as ancient well and as such the As-Haabul Ras are "those who resided in the vicinity of the ancient well." The Qur'ãn tells and makes reference to the disobedience of these people and the punishment meeted out to them in the form of destruction.

The Qur'ãn and the As-Haabul Ras

In the Qur'ãn mention is made of the As-haabul Ras in *Surah Furqan* and *Surah Qauf.* They are mentioned among these peoples who rejected the messengers of Allah and nocked at them and as a result were made to face destruction. This is done without giving any further details of their story.

> "And also 'Aad and Thamood and the companions of the Ras and many generations between them.
>
> To each one we forth parables and examples
>
> And each one we broke to utter annihilation (for their sins). (25:37—39)

"Before them was denied (the hereafter) by the people of Noah ﷺ the companions of Ras, the Thamood, the Aad, Fir-own, the brethren of Loot ﷺ

The Companions of the wood and the people of Tubba

Each of them rejected the Messengers and My warning was duly fulfilled (in them).

(50: 12—14)

The As-Haabul Ras

Why are they called the companions of the Ras? There is so much difference of opinion among the *Mufassireen* that looking at that, instead of the matter becoming more understood, it in fact becomes more hidden. In this regard we also have the research of a well-known Egyptian scholar. Farajullah Zaki Kurdi who states that '*Ras*' is actually a shortened form of the word Aras, the name of a well-known city in the area called Quf Qauz. This opinion of Allama Zai is further confirmed by Ibn Katheer who states that some *Mufassireen* say that in the area of *Azarbaijan* there was an ancient well called Ras. The people who lived in that valley were called the Companions of Ras.

The Verdict

On this question the outward meaning of the Qur'ãn seem to indicate that the event to which reference is made must have been before the coming of Hazrat Esa ﷺ. Now remains the questions as to whether it is a tale of some nations between the eras of Hazrat Esa ﷺ and Hazrat Musa ﷺ or is it regarding an ancient people. As regards this question the Qur'ãn is silent and it is almost impossible to

fix the time period although my intuition seem to go in the direction of the last opinion.

In any case the aim of the Qur'ãn is to sound a lesson and warning, and that is quite clear and this is independent as to what the time and era was. For anyone with an eye to take warning and an ear to listen to a warning it is enough to know that anyone who disregards Allah's commands and go against his commands committing sins and disobedience, then Allah after having given them time to reform and repeat, and if they still persist in their rebellious ways then Allah's punishment will come over them with destruction for them.

Baitul Muqaddas and the Jews

604 BL—571 BC and 70 A.D. to 18 A.H.—639 A.D.

Introduction

In the previous pages it has been explained that the Qur'ãn explain the historical facts of previous nations i.e. their acceptance or rejection of the messages of guidance and by bringing forth the good or bad results as admonition and warnings for others and have advised that warnings be taken from those stories. Of those events which prove to be great lessons and warnings for others is the events of what happened to Bani Israel and the Jews which led to Jerusalem and its holy place of worship being destroyed and the Jews being carried off into as slaves exile on two occasions in their history.

Baitul Muqaddas

The story of the erection of Baitul Muqaddas was dealt with under the discussion on Hazrat Sulaiman ﷺ. This town because of the presence of the Holy temple (Mosque) was

the *Qiblah* of the Jews. It is also the birth place and burial ground of numerous prophets. Not only do the Jews and Christians consider it a holy place, but so also do the Muslims. Since the *Maeraj* of Rasulullah ﷺ it has gained in importance for Muslims. And whenever a Muslim recites *Surah Israa* his heart cannot but be filled with the honour and respect for the place.

Says Allah:

> "Glory be to (Allah) who did take His servant for a journey by night from the Sacred Mosque to the faithest Mosque whose precincts We did bless—in order that We might show him some of our signs for he is the One who hears and sees (all things)." (17:01)

Warning to Bani Israel

The Qur'ãn says: We have in the Book i.e. Books of the the Allah the Exalted, informed Bani Israel that on two occasion you will be guilty of great mischief, disobedience and rebellious crimes in this holy place and as a result thereof on both occasions you will be humiliated and degraded and face destruction and this land which you love so much will be taken over by tyrannical rulers and destroyed.

Thereafter We will once again show mercy on you and We will invite you once again to obedience and if you answer that call, having been admonished by what had happened then no earthly power will be able to take away from you this fortune. However if your historical evil deeds and disobedience and opposition to truth has not been left aside and once again you become involved with your evil and disobedience then from Our side the law of retribution for evil deeds will once again be repeated and you will again be

faced with humiliation and disgrace. That is only as far as this world is concerned because in the hereafter you will also be punished.

Says the Qur'ān:

> "We gave clear warning to the Children of Israel In the Book that twice they would do mischief on the earth and be elated with mighty arrogance (and twice would they be punished).
>
> When the first of the warnings came to pass,
>
> We sent against you Our servants given to terrible warfare.
>
> They entered the very inmost parts of your homes,
>
> And it was a warnings completely fulfilled.
>
> Then did We grant you the return as against them
>
> We gave you increase in resources and sons
>
> And made you the more numerous in man power.
>
> If you did well, you did well for yourselves
>
> If you did evil, you did evil against yourselves.
>
> So when the second of the warnings came to pass
>
> (We permitted your enemies) to disfigure your faces
>
> And to enter your temple as they had entered it before,
>
> And to visit with destruction all that fell into their power.
>
> It may be that your Lord may (yet) show mercy unto you

> But if you revert (to your sins) We shall revert to our punishment;
>
> And We have made hell a prison for those who reject (all faith). (17:4—8)

In this verses the word *Al-Kitaab*, the Book, refers to those revealed scriptures to the prophets in which was prophecied about the mischief to be committed by the children of Israel, which led to the destruction of Jerussalem and the enslavement of Israel into exile. Hence even in the present Torah there are prophecies to that effect in the book of Jessiah, Ezekiel, Jeremiah, and Zakariya (*Alaihimus Salãm*). The major share of these book deal with those prophecies and the manner in which Allah has on two occasion punished them for their evils and mischief is clear confirmation of the statements of the Qur'ãn. Now comes the question: In which era did these two prophecies come to pass? How did it happen? In this respect the *Mufassireen* are of different opinions. Some believe that the first occasion of their mischief and subsequent punishment took place at the time of the attack on Jerusalem by the King Bakhat Nasar while the second was in the attack of Titas on Jerusalem. This seems to be correct historically. This seems to be corroborating the Qur'ãnic version with the following points.

1. That in 'the Book' it has been stated that Bani Israel will on two occasions be guilty of great mischief.
2. When on the first occasion they were guilty We sent such a tyrannical ruler against them who entered their very homes and destroyed their houses.
3. After this destruction, and after their repentance, We again granted them rule over themselves and their land and again enriched them with worldly goods and children.

4. We again warned them to avoid disobedience and mischief and informed them that their obedience will not benefit Allah in the least but if they should again make themselves guilty of great mischief it will be to their own detriment.

5. But once again they broke the covenant and once again we sent against them a mighty foreign power who like the first one brought destruction to Jerusalem and the temple and treated them with humiliation and contempt.

—

Even though this destruction seemed everlasting Allah will give then a third chance to left up their heads and recover but they are warned that if a third time they transgress, the again the Law of Retribution would come into operation and not only will they be punished in the world but in the hereafter as well.

According to historical facts it is known that Jerusalem was twice in history completely destroyed by a foreign tyrannical ruler who also distroyed Jewish nationalism taking them into exite. The first occasion was the destruction of Jerusalem by the King of Babilon, Bakhat Nasr which took place around 604 B.C., and the second occasion was the destruction of Jerusalem by Titus in 70 A.D. Both these occasions was a great blow against the Jews, their homeland, There religion and then nationality.

Now we have to see whether it realily is true that the bad actions of Bani Israel were in fact the cause for these two distructions or not. Were they themselves responsible for bringing the Retribution upon themselves?

The Evils of the Jews in the First Era

It has been the unchanging law of Allah that when bad manners, mischief and wickedness blood shed, oppression and injustice become the order of the day and the 'truth is opposed with hatred and jealousy and these matters become widespreads through the whole nation, then the capability of accepting the truth is taken away from them. In such a case that people become so courageous that not only do they reject the messenger bringing the message to them but even become inclined towards killing them. They then make *Shirk* and rebellion their line of action and instead of being friends of Allah, they become "friends of the *Shaitan.*"

At such a time Allah's law of Retribution comes into operation and apart from the punishment in the hereafter they are made to suffer destruction It also brings about that the arrogance and pride of that people becomes changed for a position of humiliation and degradation. All this is brought about that they can become a lesson and warning for others. In this way they are made to understand that true honour is not in there hands and so also in humiliation and honour, but only in the Hands of the All-Powerful, Creator of the Universe.

When we keep this natural law in mind as we take stock of the Jews of Bani Israel and their history in this era, we come to the conclusion that it is quite clear that the evils we mentioned formed the very basis of their lives at that time. Moreover they used to boast about this type of their life style. Hence we see that after Hazrat Dawood and Sulaiman their moral degradation was of such a nature that untruths, deceit, injustice, disobedience, wickedness had become their customary habits, so much so that they even got involved with *Shirk* and idol-worship. For a long time

Allah granted them respite so that they may reform their conditions. Allah's mercy did not initially turn away from them and in fact for their guidance Allah continued to send prophets to them, calling them to righteousness and prohibiting them from evils. However the instructions and injunctions of these prophet had very little general effect upon them. Their disobedience only increased. It also so happened that their religious leaders for the sake of acquiring silver and gold started misrepresenting the commands of Allah, making the *Haraam* into *Halaal* and vice versa. The general public put the Book of Allah behind their backs and want astray. In the end the leaders of the nation proceed with this most unfortunate act of killing the prophets unfairly after rejecting them out of hand.

Bakhat Nasr

In the 7th Century B.C. a very tyrannical and powerful king took over the throne of Babilon in Iraq. He was Bakhat Nasr. He was a great emperor but had his sights on Syria and Palestine. He moved in that direction for the sake of conquest. He first destroyed the cities of Palestine and Syria and then moved on Jerusalem, stopping at its gate. There he imprisoned the King, the nobbles and the high society. Then he proceeded to take the city apart brick by brick, attacked the Holy temple and looted everything in it and burnt all the copies of the Torah. Then he carried off about more than a handed thousand Jews like sheep and goats into exile towards Babilon. All of them were made into slaves. Even in Damascus too he put thousands of Jews to the sword so that the Jews Themselves used to say that for our having killed prophets of Allah the Emperor of Babilon was set loose upon us in revenge.

Salvation from Slavery

A glimpse of hope for the Jews during their period of slavery and exile in Babilon was the visions and prophecies of Jesiah and Jeremiya (*Alaihimus Salãm*) of which they had previously had some experience and according to which the Jews were to be in exile for seventy years where after a Persian King will appear who will be called in Messiah and Allah's shepherd. He will be the liberator of the Jews and Jerusalem and he will be called Cyrus. This prophecy was made by Jesiah about a hundred and sixty years before and Jeremiya made it sixty years before. The destruction of Judae. And during the erection of Babilon shortly before the coming to pass of the prophecy the prophet Daniyal saw the same Cyrus in a vision in the form of a sheep with two horns and the Angel Jibreel informed him that Cyrus will be the king of the joint kingdom of the Medes and the Persians. He also saw another goat with only one horn which subdued the sheep with two horns. Angel Jibreel interpreted this as meaning that this goat will be such a strong king who will destroy the kingdom of Persia and conquer it. He will be Alexander the great.

The Statement of the Torah

From history we come to know that in 559 B.C. the successor of the leader of the Medes Kamboucha (Kaykoḅar) viz., Cyrus came to power in an unusually speedy manner and within a short time he managed to unite the land of the Medes (north west Iran) and Persia and they accepted him as their one emperor. He became a powerful, independent ruler. The Persians called him Irsh or Gorush but the Greeks Knew him as Cyrus whereas in Arabic he was called Khurus. This was at the time when Babilon was ruled by one of bakhat Nasar's successors—viz., Belte Shazzar.

This king, although he was not as brave and courageous as Bakhat Nasr, he was even more tyrannical and unjust and addicted to pleasurable activities, so much so that his subjects themselves became dissatisfied with his ways and his injustices, being on the point of rebellion against him. Hence the subjects of Babilon sent a deputation of their officers to speak to Cyrus, inviting him to come and save them from the injustices and persecutions of their king. This delegation reached Cyrus at a time while he was preparing for an expedition against the East. He listened to their request and accepted it. Afterwards when he finished his expedition to the east, he reached Babilon and destroyed the city ending Babilon's reign. In this way he liberated the subjects from the tyrannical rule of Bakhat Nasr. They willingly accepted Cyrus as there new lord and master.

When Cyrus entered Babilon as a conqueror, Daniyal showed him the prophecies of the Torah which were made by Jesiah and Jeremiah (*Alaihimus Salãm*) about the person who was going to be responsible for liberating the Jews from bondage. It made such an impression on him that he made a public announcement that all the Jews were henceforth free and were permitted to return to Palestine and Syria and free to rebuiled Jerusalem and to re-errect the Holy Temple at the expense of the Government treasury. He also announced that this religion of Bani Israel was the true religion and that the God of the Jews was the true God.

In the Book of Ezra it is stated that because of Cyrus the Jews were set free and acquired prosperity and the erection of the Holy temple was commenced but before it could be completed Cyrus died. His successor and son Kamboucha (Kay Ko bar) also died soon after. Then eight years later Daraju, the cousin of Cyrus succeeded him. In his reign the temple was completed. Now once again the Jews enjoyed peace and

safety. They formed their own government. But because the previous Emperor of Babilon had burnt and destroyed all copies of the Torah, Ezra at the insistence of the Jews rewrote the Torah from memory.

The Jews had suffered a tremendous blow as was explained in the lines above. These events were a great lesson and warning for all but it seemed us if they were as the Qur'ãn explains: "They have hearts with which they do not understand. They have eyes with which they do not see and they have ears with which they do not hear."

Slowly they again made themselves guilty of injustices, wickedness and evil and soon were guilty of the same bad actions as before.

The Killing of Hazrat Yahiya عليه السلام

The details of this event is as follows: This was the era of the mission of Hazrat Yahiya عليه السلام. On the surface of the earth of Judea the effect of the preaching of Hazrat Yahiya عليه السلام was such that peoples hearts became submissive. Wherever he went people used to flock around him. At that time the King of Jwelea was Herodies, who was Known for being an evil man and a tyrant. Seeing the general popularity of Hazrat Yahiya عليه السلام he started fearing that he might lose the throne of the land, and it might land in the lap of this guide of the people.

It so happened that his step brother died, whose wife was a very beautiful woman who apart from being his sister-in-law was also his niece. Herodius was in love with her and he married her. Such a marriage was against Jewish law and as such Hazrat Yahiya objected to it and tried to get him to fear Allah. When the woman heard of the objections by Hazrat Yahiya عليه السلام she became very angry and she encouraged

Herodias to Kill Hazrat Yahiya. Herodies was himself intending such a step but hesitated somewhat but at the insistence of his "wife" he had Hazrat Yahiya killed and be headed and sent the severed head to her on a tray.

It is strang and surprising that in spite of the popularity of Hazrat Yahiya not a single Israeli had the courage to try to stop this cursed act or to object against it. Some of them even considered it a good action. Then come the era of Hazrat Esa.

Nabi Esa openly criticised their polytheistic innovations, their evil customs and irreligious attitudes. At that time what capability was left in the Jewish nation to accept the truth? So apart from a small group of sincere ones the majority of them opposed him.

At about that time the Nabaty King Haarith who was a relation of Herodias's first wife and his father-in-law attacked him and after a bloody battle defeated Herodias. This broke his power completely. The state of Judea remained alive through the strength of the Roman Empire.

Although at that time the Jews used to say that the defeat suffered by Herodias and the Israelis was a result of the murder of Hazrat Yahiya, yet they did not seem to have learnt any lesson from the events and they still did not terminate their wicked ways. They continued to oppose Hazrat Esa in all ways with the result that they went to the Governor of Judea, Pilatus to ask for permission to get rid of him. They finally surrounded him but Allah made their effects unsuccessful and lifted him up to the heavens alive.

Retribution of their Actions

Finally the retribution came along and it came in the form of civil wars among the Jews. At that time the Jewish

Community consisted of three groups. One was the scholars of Jewish law who were called the Pharlsees. Secondly there were those who used to rely upon the outer meaning of revealed words. They were called the Sadducees. The third group was the congregation of ascetic priests. There was much deep differences of opinion among the pharisees and the Sadducees that it led to heavy battles and bloodshed between them. When the ruler of Judea used to side with any one of the two groups that group used to proceed to kill the members of the other group. Finally the battles became so heavy that the ruler had to call in the help of the Romans and the Jews were then killed at the hands of polytheist idol worshippers.

It was during the period about seventy years after the lifting of Nabi Esa from this world when there was a great quarred between two claimants to be the rulers of Israel i.e. Yauhanan and Sham'oons while on the Throne of the Roman Empire a Roman general was deputising. As was called Isnibanos. Yauhanan became successful in his claim to rule and did so in a blood thirsty and wicked way so much so that practically every street of Judoa was flowing with the blood of his enemies. The Jewish people appealed to Isnibanos for help and he sent his son Titus with an army to conquer the Holy Land. Titus stopped near Judea and sent an envoy Nikanos to make an agreement of peace, but the Jews killed him too. This enraged Titus and he decided to proceed towards Jerusalem to take revenge upon all the Jews indiscriminately to cleanse the earth of them.

Historians relate that he attacked Jerusalem with such force that the walls of the city broke down and the walls of the temple fell down. A long period of siege followed during which many died of hunger. Many fled from the city and thousands were put to the sword. The Romans desecrated the

temple and placed idols therein for worship. This was that defeat of the Jews after which they never recovered and as a result of their evil deeds and open wickedness and for killing Allah's prophets they were made to suffer everlasting humiliation.

Third Golden Opportunity

After some time the Romans cast aside idol-worship and embraced Christianity and then their rise to power and their progress made the Jewish religion and their nationality appear over-powered and defeated.

Shortly before this we mentioned that when Titus conquered Jerusalem, many of the Jews fled for there to go and settle in far-off places. Among them were those who came to settle in Arabia in and near Madinah. Some historians say that they had come to know that Yathrib would be the place of *Hijrat* for the final prophet. They had for a long time been expecting the coming of the Last Prophet.

It is said that Hazrat Yahiya was once addressing them and they gathered around him and told him they were awaiting three persons, firstly the Esa, secondly Ilias, and thirdly the Nabi of the last era. This was such a well-known thing that there is not any need to mention his name. By merely referring to him every Jew knows him. In the Torah, the Injeel, in the writtings of previous prophets it is proven beyond doubt that the Jews were awaiting the prophet who was to be the Nabi of the *Akhiruz Zamaan*, who will be born in Hijaz. Thus whenever they were forced away from their centre, a considerable number of them went to settle in Hijaz.

Everlasting Humiliation

How unfortunate is that nation who far before the birth of Jesus was awaiting the appearance of a prophet whom they knew would perform *Hijrat* towards Yathrib and then they would follow him and through that they will again regain their national and deny digirity. In the same manner the tribes of ows and Khazraj too were expecting his coming. And when finally he came and announced his mission, then first of all these Jews rejected him and opposed him with enmity and hatred. They made it their main aim in life to oppose him and in the manner gathered for themselves everlasting humiliation.

From the beginning Allah already warned them that twice they were going to be rebellious and that will be followed by punishment. Thereafter there will once again be for them a third opportunity and if this time they were going to be firm against wickedness and show obedience while recognizing the truth with which the messengers come to them, then He will bring back their greatness and bless then with worldly and spiritual happiness. But if this time they threw away the chance and show to the prophet of the last era their sinful wickedness, then He will again let loose against them the law of retribution for bad deeds:

> "If you revert (to your sins) We shall revert (to our punishment). (17:8)

Thus when this time too the Jews did not let go of their natural temperament, Allah declared the final verdict against them:

> *Daribat Alayhimuz zillatu wal maskanath. Wa baa-oo bighadabim minallahi*

"They are struck with humiliation and poverty and they earn the wrath of Allah."

This is in fact what happened. They never attained to honour after that and they never had government as for centuries they wandered around in Europe being looked upon as being a despicable people. In Shekespeares drama "The Merchant of Venice" we see the character of Shylock. We also see what happened to them for a third time during the Second World War what Hitler did to them, killing thousands of them and they had to move to America from Europe and Germany. It is true that in the Middle East they managed to set up government in a limited area but the government came about as an arrangement of the big powers but who knows for how long this government will remain standing? These people who have seen the fall of the socialist world will understand how soon this government can come to an end.

Then also with the word "Jew" such an air of despicableness is attacked that any person of nobility now dislikes being called a Jew. Is this not the wrath of Allah?

Lessons and Warnings

1. Although this world is the world of deeds and not the world of rewards, Allah sometimes meet out punishment for deeds done so that they and their contemparies have to admit that such punishment were for such deeds committed. Such events then become a source of warning and admonishment for others. This is especially applicable in cases of arrogance and pride which are such mothers of sins that apart from what awaits in the hereafter, the proud and arrogant one is also made to experience the evil effects of these deeds in this world. One major difference is this that in cases

of individual pride and arrogance the retribution will also be individual whereas in cases national and congregational arrogance and pride, their community life will be affected by the punishment. Another difference is that the individual punishment generally does not last very long whereas in the case of community arrogance the period seems so long that the wronged group is brought almost to the brink of hopelessness. However, sometimes for the sake of the warnings and lessons contained therein, the period is also shortened.

2. When the rejectors of truth and the worshippers of evil is being punished in this world for evil deeds committed, it does not mean that the punishment of the hereafter is wared from them, or that they have been pardoned. No that punishment will still come in its own time.

   "And We have made hell a prison for those who reject (all faith). (17:8)

3. When Allah desires to punish a people because of their evil deeds and injustices or desires to let loose over them retribution for deeds committed then His customary way of doing it is such that He does not immediately proceeds with the punishment, but He gives a period of respite, allowing the guides and prophets a further chance of bringing them on the right path so that Allah's argument agains them is complete. And if after that their disobedience still continues then suddenly He will seize them in punishment and without the full punishment they will not be saved and liberated. Then the following statement of Allah will become a reality:

> "Soon will the unjust assailants know what vicissitudes their affairs will take." (26:227)

4. If something according to our minds appear to be wonderful or miraculous, it does not necessarily mean that that thing is in actual fact wonderful in its true reality. And even if it seems wonderful it is possible that that may only be so in our sight and not so in the sight of the Creator, who created all this universe from nothingness into existence and now keeps everything intact according to His own system, which is so astonishing to the eyes which daily observes it while the mind is forced to admit:

   > "Verily for Allah, such a thing is not difficult at all."

5. When the forces of evil, injustice and tyranny become so strong that for the righteous ones there is no refuge, then even if it is the most appropriate obligation to face all the obstacles and difficulties while remaining steadfast on the path of truth, one should not break off ties with other human beings and adopt a life of seclusion. But when the situation deteriorates to such an extent that by continuing contact with fellow-men one is forced to choose between death on the one hand and the adopation of a false religion, and the conditions become such that:

   > "For if they should come upon you, they would stone you or force you to their cult, and in that case you would never attain to prosperity."

Then in such a case there is permission for preserving one's life and for the protection of deen to cut oneself off from the world and to seek refuge in a life of seclusion.

In other words this is a temporary solution for an emergency situation which may only be adopted for the preservation of *Deen* and faith. Yet in Islãm it is not considered a favourable solution at all times because the adoption of the ascetic life of a hermit is tantamount to monasticism.

It is said in *Hadith*: "There is no monasticism in Islãm" and Islãm does not approve of monasticism.

According to the history of Christianity in the early era of Christianity a few incidents like the companions of the Cave took place in various places e.g., in Rome, Antioch and in the town of Ephesus. For this reason these people of their own accord adopted a life of ascetism in seclusion, away from the people. But later as time passed this life style became a way of life with some Christians and they began to lool upon this innovation as an important past of Christian life. Just like in India where the religious monks among the Hindus started adopting a life of seclusion in the mountains and the wilderness, they also started doing the same; considering it a vital part of the religion.

However the Qur'ãn made it very clear that in itself this act of monasticism is not an approved practice. Rather is it an innoration among other innovations:

Qur'ãn says:

> "But the monasticism which they invented for themselves, We did not prescribe for them. (We commanded) only the seeking for the good pleasure of Allah; but that they did not foster as they should have done." (57:27)

This means Allah did not choose monasticism as a means of worship. They themselves chose it and even though initially

it was adopted with the aim of gaining His pleasure, later they could not uphold it and later worldly ones used it as a means to acquire worldly riches.

The truth of the matter is that the best path is one of moderation. In it there's no difficulty, no ups and downs no excesses nor deficiencies and it is a way of reaching the intended objective without difficulty. Because Islãm is the natural religion it has chosen the path of moderation in all things. Hence in as much as it disapproves of completely being involved with people at all times it also disapproves of a complete life of seclusion like a hermit. Rasulullah ﷺ is reported to have said that in Islãm the monasticism is to perform *Jihad* in the path of Allah.

This is so because when a person enters the field of *Jihad* he takes him self and becomes independent of his wealth and his family and all worldly ties and only proceed with the aim of fulfilling that which pleases Him.

6. Hazrat Abdullah bin Abbaas ؓ, explaining the circumstances for the revelation of the verse: "Nor say of anything: I shall be sure to do so and so tomorrow, except adding on, If Allah pleases and so mishes," states that when the idol worshippers of Makkah asked the Messenger of Allah ﷺ about the companions of the Cave, he said to them: "I shall give you the answer tomorrow after receiving the Revelation from Allah."

However in saying that he forgot to add on '*insha-Allah*'. The result was that for fifteen days the revelation stopped. This caused the idol worshippers to start cheering and Rasulullah ﷺ became quite worried. After fifteen days Revelation was restarted. He related the necessary details of the *Ashaabil-Kahf* and also told then that when one is

to give a promise regarding something to do in the future he should always make it subject to the will of Allah. It should always be remembered that a man does not know what will happen tomorrow. Will he ever be alive tomorrow or not.' And even if he is alive, will he be able to carry out his promise?

7. *Deen* is the straight path of Allah. Therefore it cannot be forced into the heart of anyone by force. In fact with its true light it enlightens the blind hearts of the people. "There is no compulsion in religion." Yet as far as falsehood is concerned, it has always been the occurrence that it tries to force itself down into the hearts of people with tyrannical and despolic unjust ways and instead of bringing forth clear, proofs and arguments in its favour. However it has always been Allah's way to cause *Deen* to be victorious over falsehood. It is however Allah's way also to take time in effecting this with the result that the people of falsehood look upon that initial successes as victory. They become unmindful of the wrath of Allah which is to follow and time and again in time we see history being repeated.

8. Experience show us that in every battle for the truth and in fact in every evolutionary movement the youth are the ones most easily influenced—more so than the aged ones. Exports on psychology tell us that the reason for this is that the aged ones had spend most of their lives being used to the old ways and had become so attached to those ways, that any new movement immediately looked upon with suspicion and dislike and anything opposing those old ways brings out opposition in them. For this reason any new revolutionary movement's ideas instead of

finding favour with them causes them to be withdrawn from it. They will be prepared to give much more thought to new ideas before becoming inclined towards them and only after solid proofs and arguments. When, however that does happen and after solid proofs and arguments they do incline towards it, such aged ones become excepted from this general rule and they become the backbone supports of the new movemeant. In any nation these ones form a minority.

On the other hand, unlike the aged ones, the youth in their hearts and minds are generally neutral and they have not yet become so accustomed to the old ways. Therefore new ideas easily influence them and they do not look upon new revolutionary ideas with suspicion just because they are new. With interest they will look at them and give their thoughts out to them.

Now it is the responsibility of this revolutionary movement, that if they strive in the battle between truth and falsehood to put man on the straight path, the supervisors should assist these youths in all their numbers and support then in acquiring the best of dignity and high rank, till they are proven to be a mercy for existence in this world. However if they strive for the opposite of that, it will mean that the leaders of such a revolutionary movement can lead these youths to destruction and they will become a calamity for man and this world.

9. Qur'ãn says: "Nor say of any thing: "I shall be sure to do so and so tomorrow without adding: If Allah should please. (18:23)

In this verse Allah teaches us that when one intends to do something in the future, he should not say. I will surely

do this or that tomorrow, except adding on "if Allah pleases." (*Inshallah*) This is so because no one knows what is to happen tomorrow. Will the utterer of this world still he alive tomorrow. The matter should be made subject to Allah's pleasure.

10. ......and say: I hope that my Lord will guide me even closer (even) then the right road." (18:24)

This is an indication to the prophet that very soon such a matter will appear before you which may be even stranger and wonderful you will have to leave you hometown, for quite a number of days you will have to hide in a cave. The enemy will come up to the mouth of the cave and from there such a way towards success and victory will open up before you which will be more wonderful than this story of the *As-Haabil-Kahf.*

This *Surah* is one of the last Makkan *Surahs* to be revealed. Not long after its revelation, the *Hijrat* took place which caused a tremendous upheaval in the lives of Muslims and there truth started to overcome falsehood.

Thul Qarnain

(B.C. 561 approximately)

Introduction

In the Qur'ãn in *Surah Al-Kahf* mention is made of such a king whose nickname was Thul-Qarnain who made conquests in the East and the West. He also reached such a place where the inhabitants complained to him that Yajooj and Majooj were troubling them with heavy attacks on them, causing great destruction. They begged him to save them from those people.

Thul Qarnain hearing all this consoled them and after smelting iron and copper, he built such a gate between two mountains that the people because safe against Yajooj and Majooj.

This story is divided into three important parts:

1. The Person of Thul-Qarnain
2. The place of where the gate of Thul Qarnain is situated
3. Who is Yajooj and Majooj.

The Person of Thul Qarnain

The following opinions have been given as to who Thul Qarnain is:

(a) The well-known opinion is that he was Alexander the great.

(b) Various Arab and Iranian poets have mentioned that he was one of the kings from their areas.

(c) In the Qur'ãn we read that he was of Arab origin, it also seems he belonged to the Ancient Semites and was a contemporary of Hazrat Ibraheem ﷺ.

Maulana Hifzur Rahman discussed these opinions in detail one finally more or less agreed with the views of Maulana Abul Kalam Azaad. We quote his views here: Maulana Kept in mind as a basis for his view the fact that Thul Qarnain should be identified as a pious person and a follower of the true religion of his time. Maulana feels that the only person who fits that description is the one who in Hebrew is called Khorus and who in Persian is called Arish or Ghorush and is also Known as Cyrus in Greek In Arabic he is called Khusro.

Before we discuss the question of Thul Qarnain we must ask ourselves why the Qur'ãn drew attention to him. This was basically as a result of a question that was put to Rasulullah ﷺ who was the questioner and why was this question put to Rasulullah ﷺ?

This question was actually the key to the whole question. Although the *Mufassireen* and historians did attend to this matter, it seems as if they discarded it when trying to identify Thul Qarnain.

Then also it should be remembered that the identity of Thul Qarnain, the where about of the gate of Thul Qarnain and

the identity of *Yajooj* and *Majooj*—even though these are three different questions—yet if the identity of Thul Qarnain is fixed, the other two becomes easier to identify and establish.

The Question about Thul Qarnain

Muhammad ibn Ishaaq reports on the authority of Ibn Abbaas that once Quraish of Makkah sent Nathar bin Haarith and Uqba bin Mueet to the Jewish scholars in Madinah saying: "You call yourselves the people of the Book and you claim that you people have the knowledge of the previous prophets which we do not have. Now tell us, about Muhammad ﷺ, have you any mention of any signs for the truth of his claim to being a prophet of Allah? or not?"

The delegation from Makkah came to Yathrib and explained the reason for their coming there. The Jewish rabbis told them; "Leave aside all these things. We shall give you their questions. If he answers correctly then know that he is true in his claim to prophethood and that he is a prophet with a mission, in which case it will be obligatory on you to follow him. And if he fails to answer correctly he is a liar. Then you are free to do with him as you wish. The questions are

i) Explain the condition of the person who conquered from the East to the West.

ii) What happened to the few young men who went to hide in a cave from a tyrannical king who was an unbeliever.

iii) What is the Rooh (soul)?

The delegation returned to Makkah and told Quraish what the Jewish scholars had said. The Quraish hearing the words of the Jews said:

> "Now it has become easy for us to judge between ourselves and Muhammad ﷺ."

This is so because an unlettered person will only be able to answer those questions if revelation comes to him from Allah's side. Therefore they came to Rasulullah ﷺ and placed these questions before him. It was in reply to these questions that *Surah al-Kahf* was revealed:

Why these Specific Questions

Let us ponder over these questions once more as was reported by Muhammad ibn Ishaaq. We have learned that the idol-worshippers of Makkah were actually prompted by the Jews of Yathrib to put them to Rasulullah ﷺ. The question now arises why did the Jews have any interest in those specific question viz. Thul Qarnain and the As-haabil Kahf? What importance did they attach to these questions so much so that they made the answers to those questions the criterior of accepting Rasulullah ﷺ as being a true prophet or a liar.

Why did they choose Thul Qarnain as basis for a question? The answer is this that they chose such a personality who holds great importance in their religions life and who in their national and community life they will never be able to forget because it was through his doings that the whole of Bani Israel were saved from bondage in Babilon and through him their national *Markaz* and *Qiblah* and their Holy Place Jerusalem became once more erected and restored after having been completely destroyed. It was for these reasons that he was called their saviour, liberator and their Messiah and Allah's herdsman. These are the nicknames given to him in their holy scriptures, wherein he was greatly honoured. This seems to be the reason why he was chosen as one of the questions to be put to Rasulullah ﷺ. Special importance was given to this question as the Qur'ãn indicates: "They ask you concerning Thul Qarnain...... The Jews" though that when Muhammad ﷺ made this claim that he is Allah's True prophet

and that he considers the religion of all His prophets as being 'one *Deen*' and seeing that he greatly honours the prophet of Bani israel, considering them as true prophets, then because of him being an illiterate man, then surely through revelation received he will be able to grant them details about Thul-Qarnain, through whose doing Bani Israel was saved and liberated from the persecution by an idol-worshipping king's.

The Prophets of Bani Israel

From the prophecies of the Prophets Jesiah ﷺ, Jeremiya ﷺ, Daniyal ﷺ, Ezra ﷺ and Zakariya ﷺ in the Torah the following facts are established

1. The person who took Bani Israel out of their bondage in Babilon was Khoras the King of the Kingdom of the Medes and the Persians.
2. From the vision seen by the prophet Daniyal ﷺ and interpreted by Hazrat Jibrael he was called Thul Qarnain (the two horned one) because he joined the two kingdoms into a united kingdom. This is why he became known as Thul Qarnain among the Jews.
3. In the scriptural writings this king was also called the Messiah of Allah the liberator and saviour of Israel and Allah's herdsman.
4. In spite of Jewish prejudice and their national pride, as a result of these events the Jews still mentioned a non-Israeli person with such high and noble characteristics, which in the past the kept confined to their ancient Prophets (*Alaihimus Salãm*).
5. In the Book of the Prophet Jessiah ﷺ they speak of this person 'coming down'. Actually Khorus came from

the north towards the South, towards Media and Persia and this is the meaning of that prophecy.

6. In the prophecy by Hazrat Zakariya ﷺ he is called "the growing branch" It seems the meaning is that his advent and arrival will be in an unusual manner as normally happens will such personalities from Allah's side regarding those persons of whom Allah wishes to make use of for special takes.

Historical Evidence

By 622 B.C. The governments of Babilon and Ninevah were on the rise to power and before the arrival of Khorus the land of Iran (Persia) was divided into two separate countries. The north western part was called Media and the western section was called Persia. In both these sections tribal chiefs were ruling. When in 612 B.C. the Assyrian rule of Ninevah was destroyed, even though Media had become a free nations, it so happened that the tribal rule slowly started changing to a king's rule. With the rise of the tyrannical king of Babilon, there seemed no possibility for Persia to move to the front. In 559 B.C. there came a man to the front who with his rule of justice and careful planning but without any warfare joined the Medes and the Persians into one land with their agreement. Both governments accepted him as their king of the United Kingdom. He is the one whom Persians called Ghorish, or Arish and whom the Jews call, Khorus.

An Urgent Task in the West

Soon after uniting the Medes and the Persian and starting his rule over them Khorus was faced with an urgent task in the west. On the west of Media and Persia lies the land of Lydia in Asia Minor. Many years before the present

leader of Lydias father had made a peace agreement with the grandfather of Khorus and between them they had set up marriage ties between the two rulers to strengthen that agreement of no war between them. But now that Khorus had united Media and Persia, the present ruler of Lydia, Cardisus disagreed with this and subsequently tore up the agreement made by his father and made an attack on Media. This forced Khoras into action towards the defence of Media. He left has capital at Hamadan and within two battles managed to conquer the whole of Asia Minor as the well-known Greek historian, Herodotus states, that this campaign of Khorus was so brilliant and miraculous that within fourteen days he subdued the strength of Lydia at the battle of Peria and Cardisus was brougth before him as a captive. Now even though the whole of Asia came under his power he still went forward in conquest up to the western shore of the Black Sea a distance of over fourteen hundred miles.

Geographers state the capital of Lydia Sardis was situated near the Western shore of the Black Sea and the description of the Western of Asia Minor was such that near Samarna there were many small islands that the shore appeared like a lake or a swamp and the water of this part of the Aegian Sea seemed muddy dark and dirty and at sunset the sun appeared as if it was sinking in a muddy lake.

Historians state that Khorus conquered Asia Minor in a brave manner but unlike the other conquerors of his time, he committed no injustice and persecution against the conquered peoples and also did not exile them from their lands. In fact he ruled over Sardis in such a manner that the people could not even feel that a change of ruler and government had occurred. They only managed to replace Cardisus for a just ruler like Khorus.

Herodotus writes:

> "Cyrus ordered his army that apart from the army of the enemy they should not attack anybody else and if those soldiers put down their spears, they should not be killed And even if cardisus should strike with their swords, no harm should be made to suffer by them."

It is said that as far as belief was concerned, it was that of a pious man and a just king as a Greek historian writes:

"His belief was that wealth did not belong to kings as their personal possessions for their comforts but was meant for the general welfare of the people so that he subjects should derive benefit from it."

Important Task in the East

Herodotus relates that before Khorus could conquer Babilon he had to set out on an expedition to the East of Iran, because some of the wild tribes of the far east and desert tribes started rebelling against him they were the tribes of Bacteria. According to some historical references we read that the wandering tribes from the area which today is known as Makran, were the tribes who rebelled against Iran. Their area lies to the East of Iran. Thereafter lies mountain ranges which blocks the route further east.

The Third Expedition

Apart from his conquest of babilon, another expedition of Khorus is mentioned in history. This was towards the north of Iran. The route was towards the right shore of the Caspian Sea towards the Canasian Mountains. There he came across a pass which lies between the mountains like a gate between

them. When he reached there some people complained to him about the attacks and devastation caused to them by two peoples—Yajooj and Majooj who used to come through that pass and launching attacks upon them, which causes great destruction and losses.

Therefore Khurus used iron and copper to build a gate across the pass, closing it up. He also erected a metal wall, the rains and remnants are still existing up till today.

Thus both Herodolus and Zenbofon, two Greek historians state that Khorus after conquering Lydia proceeded to make preparation to stop the continues attacks of the Scythians.

This is also a fact which will you become quite clear soon that during the time of Khorus the tribes of Yajooj and Majooj were two Scythian tribes who used to cause their neighbours great harassment and destruction.

The Conquest of Babilon

Now when the conquests of Khorus had become quite undespread that it strotched from the furtherst west of Iran to the sea and up to the Black Sea and up to the shore of the Aegrian Sea and in the furthest East up to makran or rather up to the Sindh River. In the north his territory stretched up to the Caucasion mountain Ranges. Now he turned his attention to the well-known civilized city and the might of Babilon. The history of this expeditions is also noted in history.

About fifty years before Khorus, Bakhat Nasr was at the head of the government of Babilon. According to the beliefs of that time he was not only a king but among the idols worshipped by the people of Babilon, he was the greatest god and as such he had the right among them to do what he wished with all other governments. He could punish any people in any terrible way that he saw fit. If he wished to

destroy them or exile them he could do so, and subject them to the most terrible or savage treatment. For this reasons his harsh treatment of the subject nations in subjugating them was so bad as we have seen in previous lines. During his time he thrice attacked Jerusalem and destroyed Palestine and carried the inhabitants off as slaves to Babilon like animals. A Jewish historian josephas writes:

> "The harshest of merciless slaughteres do not lead his sheep to the slaughter house with more savagery or blood thirstiness as bakhat Nasr carried of the children of Israel to Babilon."

The government of Babilon after the destruction of the Assyrian government had became even stronger and more powerful so that none of the neighbourery states had the courage to try and conquer them in spite of their oppression and tyranny. However soon after the destruction of Jerusalem, Bakhat Nasr died and his successor was Nayoni Das succeeded him. He put the whole burden of ruling the country on the shoulders of Balshazzar, one belonging to the royal family. He was a great lover of pleasure and an oppressor ruler but was not as brave and courageous as Bakhat Nasr.

It was during his reign that one of the Israeli prisoners, Hazrat Daniyal ﷺ, with wisdom managed to captivate the court of Babilon to such an extent that he became a special advisor to the government. Hazrat Daniyal ﷺ on various occasions admonished Balshazzar because of his love of pleasure and injustices. However Balshazzar paid no hood to those warnings, until he finally decided to withdraw from the government. Here in babilon this happened while the people of Babilon were for a considerable time making plants to old themselves of the oppression and injustices of Bulshazzar. Some of their leaders were putting forth the suggestion that

help should be sought from the powerful country of Iran and that a plea should be made to the just ruler of Iran to grant riddance of the oppression of Balshazzar. Babilon would be prepared to assist in getting rid of him.

Hence in 54 B.C. a deputation from Babilon came to Khurus while he was busy with his Eastern expedition. Khorus welcomed them and promised them that on completing that expedition, he would definitely attack Babilon to get rid of Balshazzar. Thus when he complete his eastern expedition he attacked Babilon.

All the historians are unanimous on this fact that at that time was no city worth conquering like Babilon. The city walls were so thick and strong that no would be conqueror had the courage to attack it. But having seen the justice dispensed by Khorus and his merciful nature the inhabitants of Babilon became attracted to him so much so that one of the governors of Babilon, Cop Riyas accompanied him. According to Herodotus, this governor cut a camel in the river and caused the flow of the river to be diverted another direction and in this way the army entered the city from the river's side. Thus even before reached there the city was conquered and Balshazzar was killed.

The Religious Beliefs of Khorus

As regards the religious beliefs of Khorus both the Torah and the historians are agreed that just as he united the small states of Iran into a large and powerful empire and just as he differed with the general trend among kings who unjustly oppressed the subject peoples, he acted with mercy and justice towards them and thereby strengthened his powers, so also he differed with other Irani kings by discarding the customary religion and adopted the true

religion. This becomes clear from the books of Ezra ﷺ and Daniyal ﷺ in the old testament.

From inscriptions which were made regarding Darius on the rocks in the mountains we come to know that both Darius and his successor Khorus were men who did not follow the *Majoosi* (Magian) religion. We also come to know that the Being whom Darius called Ahwar Mozedah and on whom he called by that name and the attributes he attributed to Him we learn that he and Khorus were upon the true religion. In Arabic He was called Allah, in Syrian He was Elohim, in Hebrew He was known as Eel, and in Iran He was called Ahwar Mozedah. All these names referred to the Same Being. Darius says He was unique. He is the Creator of the Universe. Good and evil are all in His Hands. In fact together with the belief in the one ness of God, he also believed in the hereafter, advising men to follow the straight path and to avoid sins. It is quite clear that these are all points which are not part of the *Majoosi Deen.* Hence Darius he considered the success against the *Majoosi* people due to the grace of Ahwar Mozdal. Now there remains the question: Which religious leader of the time did he and Khorus follow? This question can be adequately answered after looking at a few introductory points.

The Religion of Zorotashet

The Ancient religion of Iran was Magianism. During the period from 583 B.C. to 550 B.C., the North Western part of Iran, i.e., the area of Qafqauz and Azarbaijan which was known as the valley of Aris, a personality who was inspired by Allah rose up. This was Ibrahim Zorotashet. He preached the true religion among the Persians and spread the word of Allah among them.

Even though the holy Book of Zorotashet the vesta had also become altered and distorted like other books before the Qur'ãn, still there are some sentences in it which are common to other revealed works. e.g., seeking refuge from the whisperings of *Shaytaan*, the praise of Allah, the Merciful and Beneficent God. The Scholars from Europe are all agreed that the religion of Zorotashet was quite different from the ancient religion of Persia and that it was originally the true religion. It was a religion where in idol-worship, fire worship were all prohibited and no other worship was permissible except the worship of Allah.

Thul Qarnain and the Holy Qur'ãn

Regarding Thul Qarnain we have dealt with two major points viz., the prophecies in the Torah and the historical evidence. Now there remains the question: The person about whom those prophecies are made and about whom historical evidence is given, is he in fact the person to whom the Qur'ãn refers as Thul Qarnain? Before we answer that question it seems logical that we should quote those verses referring to him so that afterwards it would be easier to reconcile the two sets of facts.

In the Qur'ãn the story is told thus:

> "(O Muhammad) they ask you concerning Zul-Qarnain. Say: I will rehearse to you something of his story.
>
> Verily We established his power on earth and We gave him the ways and means to all ends.
>
> One such way he followed until when he reached the setting of the sun, he found it set in a spring of mudy water

Near it he found a people: We said: O Zul Qarnain (you have authority) either to punish them or to treat them with Kindness.

He said: "However does wrong, him shall we punish, then shall he be sent back to his Lord. And He will punish him with a punishment unheard of.

But whoever believes and works righteousness, He shall have a goodly reward and easy will be his task as we order it by our command.

Then followed he another way.

Until he came to the rising of the sun, he found it rising on a people for whom We have provided no protection against the sun.

(He left them) as they were.

We completely understood what was before him.

Then followed he another way.

Until he reached a (tract) between two mountains

He found beneath them a people who scarcely understood a word.

They said: "O Zul Qarnain, the Yajooj and Majooj people do great mischief on earth. Shall we render to you tribute in order that you may erect a barrier between us and them?

He said: "(The Power) in which My Lord has established me is better than tribute: Help me therefore with strength (and labour) I will erect a strong barrier between you and them.

"Bring me blocks of iron. At length when he had filled up the space between the two mountain sides, he said:

"Blow (with your bellows) Then when We had made it red as fire, he said: "Bring me that I may pour over it molten lead."

Thus were they made powerless to scale it or to dig through it.

He said: 'This is a mercy from my Lord. But when the promise of my Lord come to pass, He will make it into dust and the promise of my Lord is true.

"On that day We will make them to surge

Like waves on one another, the trumpt will be blown

And we shall collect them all together."

(And We shall present Hell that day for the unbelievers

To see all spread out.

(Unbelievers) whose eyes had been under a veil

from the remembrance of Me.

And who had been unable to hear.") (18:83—101)

Let us see what fact the Qur'ãn brings to light about Zul Qarnain and see also how those facts fit Khorus:

1. First of all the Qur'ãn says that the story of Zul Qarnain is related in answer to a question put to the Rasulullah ﷺ. They mentioned him by this name. The Qur'ãn did not of its own self call him by that name.

Similarity: According to authentic reports we have already learned that at the prompting of the Jews the Makkans

asked three questions to Rasulullah ﷺ. One of the question was: Tell us the details of that king who travelled from East to the West and who is only known once in the Torah by this name Zul Qarnain. According to a vision of Daniyal عليه السلام in the Torah a king of Iran was seen as a sheep with two horns and Jibrael interpreted the vision as being of a king who will be Master of Media and Persia. The prophecy of Jesiah and history also confirm that this king was Khorus (Cyrus) who united Media and Persia into a single kingdom. The Jews had an interest in this king because it was he who liberated them from slavery in Babilon. The name the Jews gave him became so well-known that after the death of Khorus they made a statue of him and drew a picture of Daniyal عليه السلام vision. And because in the Book of Jessiah عليه السلام he has also been called an eagle, therefore near Istakhar a statue of Khoras was discovered and dug up with both these descriptions i.e., with two horns on both sides with an eagle on the head. This same image was not produced for any other king in history.

The Jews had this interest in him who was their saviour and whom they called their Messiah and Allah's herdsman and as such they were prepared to make a question about him the test as to the truth of Rasulullah's ﷺ mission, and in response to their question the Qur'ãn related the story of Khorus.

2. The Qur'ãn further states he was a king with great grandeur and pomp with dignity and that Allah had granted him all forms of wealth for his government.

According to the Torah as well as ancient and present day historical references it has been established that he gathered and united all the Iranian tribes into a kingdom and Empire and even conquered the great civilized lands of Babilon and Nineveh and to such an extent extended the boundaries of his kingdom that actually Allah did grant him all the necessities for life and government.

3. The Qur'ãn states that Zul Qarnain undertook three noteworthy expeditions. In truth historical facts also show that he undertook three important expeditions.
4. According to historical records Khorus's first expedition was towards the west.

The Qur'ãn states:

> "Verily we established his power on earth and we gave him the ways and means to all ends. One such way he followed until he reached the setting of the sun, he found it set in a spring of murky water. (5:56—58)

According to Herodatus, the Greek historian and other historians it is established that Khorus's first and most important expedition was towards the west when as a result of the treacherous actions of the Lydian King, Cardisus, Khorus was obliged to launch an attack on Lydia. This was situated near the western most shore of Asia Minor. Herodotus says this expeditions was so brilliant and miracilous that within fourteen days he managed to conquer all the territory up to the Western shore, conquering such a town as Sardis which was well fortified. All the territory up to the Acgean Sea became his. In this sea there were many islands and it appeared like a lake, the water being so murky that the sun setting appears as if it set in a dark swamp.

5. The Qur'ãn states that Allah gave Zulqarnain such a victory over the people that he could do with them as he wished. He could either punish them for their evil deeds or he could treat them kindly and mercifully.

History tells us that after Khorus had gained the upper hand over Lydia, he did not like the general king of his time treat them with destruction and harshness, but instead treated

them with justice and mercy. He did not destroy them but in fact announced a general pardon to all the enemies and did not even exile the enemies. In fact apart from the fact that he had cardisus captured, it further did not appear as if any change of government and ruler took place. In fact he first gave the order that Cardisus should be burnt to death on a funeral pure but when all was ready he even pardoned him and treated him with honour and respect.

6. The Qur'ãn quotes the saying of Zul Qarnain from which we can deduce that he was a believer and a just and pious ruler. He said: "We shall not be unjust. But whosoever commits a wrong, him shall we punish, them shall he be bent back to his Lord. And he will punish him with a punishment unheard of. And whoever believes and works righteousness, He shall have a goodly reward and easy will be his task as we order it by our command." (18:87—88)

Statements in the Torah with regard to Khorus's connection with Jerusalem and the inscriptions of Darius and his announcements as well as the evidence of the Torah and the 'Vesta' gives us the confirmed fact that both Darius and Khorus were believers and followers of a prophet. In fact they were missionaries for that religion. They were followers of the *Deen* of Ibraheem Zorotashet, who worshipped one god, believed in the hereafter and their religion had reached the stage of being a branch the teachings of the prophet. This *Deen* became uttered and changed very soon after the death of this prophet Zorotashet.

7. The Qur'ãn also says that Zul Qarnain undertook a second journey towards the East and when he reached there he met some wandering tribes.

The Qur'ãn says:

> "Then he followed another way. Until he came to the rising of the Sun he found it rising on a people for whom we have provided no protection against the sun."

History tells us that Khorus on this second expedition to the East came into contact with the wandering tribes of Makran who had committed rebellion and mischief. The details of this expedition had already been discussed. At this point it is worth noting that instead of mentioning that Zul Qarnain set off in a westerly or Easterly direction, the Qur'ãn ;speak about him setting forth till reaching "the rising of the sun" and "till reaching the setting of the sun". From this some people made the wrong deduction that Zul Qarnain had become the ruler of the whole world, but this has not been proven to be the case for any king in history. Moreover the Qur'ãn did not use those words to indicate that he was a ruler of the whole world but merely intended to indicate that his kingdom stretched to the furthest west and the furthest east and that he reached that part of the world where day land stopped and the shore begins and in the east he reached that place where the wandering tribes were living after having passed the inhabited towns and villages.

8. The Qur'ãn states that apart from the above-mentioned two expeditions he also undertook a third journey and when he reached there where between two mountain ranges there was a pass where he met a people who were unable to understand his language. They somehow explained to him that the tribes of Yajooj and Majooj come through the pass to trouble and harrass them and to commit mischief in the land. They asked him to accept tribute from them and to close

up the pass to prevent Yajooj and Majooj from crashing over. He told them that what Allah gives is sufferent for him and there is no need for them to pay him. However he is prepared to help them it they were prepared to help him. They gathered pieces of iron and from that Zul Qarnain built a gate between the mountains and then melted copper with which to strengthen the gate.

According to underiable evidence from history Khorus undertook a third expedition to the north towards the Caucasus mountains (towards mount Caucus or to mount Qauf). There between two mountain ranges he met a people living this side of a pass, while on the other side of the pass lived the seythran tribes who used come through the pass to attack, harrass and plunder among them. These tribes were wild and uncivilized and used to attack these people from time to time and escape back through the pass. When Zul Qarnain reached there these people laid there complaints before him and asked him to erect a wall across the pass to keep the wild tribes out of reach. Khorus decided to accede to their request and made a wall out of iron and copper. In spite of Yajooj and Majooj being such strong tribes, they were unable to break down this wall. Neither could they came over it to launch further attacks and so the people were saved from their attacks.

Yajooj and Majooj

Now comes the question as to who Yajooj and Majooj are? The *Mufassireen* and historians of Islãm have quoted many types of reports in this regard they also state that most of these reports are fabrications and nonsensical except for a few. Otherwise most of these reports are unreliable and also logically unsound and scripturally rejected.

A common description of Yajooj and Majooj is this that they are a tribe who physically and socially are a strange people. They are described as being of very short stature about 1 to 1$^{1/4}$ span high, (about 3 foot) or at the most 1 meter high while some of them are exceptionally tall. One report says their two ears are so big that one may be used as a shawl about the body while the may be used as a matress on which to sleep. Their faces are wide and round out of proportion with their height. For their food they take out a special fish from the sea twice every year, the distance between the tail and the head of the fish is so much that a man takes ten days and nights to walk across it. Then also they eat such a snake which had already digested all the earthly animals of the area until it is thrown into the sea where for miles on end it eats up all the marine animals. Then a cloud appears and the Angels lift this huge snake onto it and the cloud then throws this snake down among the tribes of Yajooj and Majooj.

Another report says Yajooj and Majooj are an in between people born of Adam ﷺ but not of Hazrat Hawwa.

However the verdict of the research scholars of Islãm is this that they are ordinary people of this world and like the other off-spring of man. They are not a notion with supernatural eating habits. They may be said to be the original people from whom the nations of Europe and Russia came Because their neighbours called the Mog and Yochi, the Greeks called them Mek and Meygog and Logog. The Hebrew and Arabic equivalent of it was Yajooj and Majooj. And even though Yajooj and Majooj were Mongolian (Tatari), the Tatari people who settled at the pass after having left their original habital and became civilized in spite of being of the same origin, there were much differences between them and the people this side of the pass. These were the people who asked

Zul Qarnain to erect a barrier between them and the tribes of Yajooj and Majooj.

The Barrier Wall of Zul Qarnain

After having ascertained who Yajooj and Majooj were the next question to ascertain is the whereabouts of the Barrier built by Zul Qarnain before proceeding with the task of fixing the whereabouts of the barrier wall of Zul Qarnain one should bear in mind that the area of the devastation and plundering caused by Yajooj and Majooj was so wide that on the one side those who lived south of the Caocasion Mountains were greatly harassed while on the north and east side the people of China and Tibbet suffered the same fate. For this reason it so happened that various barrier walls were built at various times in history for safeguarding against their marauding hosts.

1. For example, their was the Great Wall of China which was almost a thousand miles long. It is also called the Mongalian Atkoda and in Turkish its name is "Bokorka."

2. A second barrier wall lies in the middle of Asia near the towns of Bukhara and Taraz at a place called *Derbend.* This wall was already present in the time of the Ameer Taimur Gorgani the great, and the special courtier of the Roman Emperor Silibar Girgirmany made mention of it in his book. And so also has it been mentioned in the account of his travels by Kalamchu the envoy of the King of Castile in Andalusia (Spain). This envoy visited Ameer Taimur Gorgani in 1403 A.D. on behalf of his King and he managed to pass the wall. He writes: "The wall of the iron door is situated on the Mosul route which leads from Samarkand to India."

3. A third barrier wall is situated in the Russain Territory of Daghistan. This is also called *Derbend* and is known as '*Babul Abwaab*'. Some historians also call it *Al-Baab* (the door). Yaqoot Hamawy in his *Mu'jamul Buldaan* made a mention of it in detail and so did Idreesy in his Geography and so also did Bustani in his *Da'iratul Ma'aarif*. The sum total of their writings is:

"*Derbend* in Daghistan is a Russain city. It is situated on the Western shore of the Caspian Sea. Its latitude is 43.3^0 N and its longitude is 48.15^0 East. The town is also called *Derbend Anusherwan*, but it is best known as '*Babul Abwaab*'. The town is surrounded by four such walls which ancient historians have called *Abwaabul Baaniyah*. Now these walls are all in a dilapidated state and is also called '*Babul Hadeed*'—iron door because the walls have huge iron gates attached to them.'

4. When one proceeds from this *Babul Abwaab* towards the west towards the Interior of Caucasia one comes across a pass which is known as Daryal Pass which is situated in the highest parts of Caucesia. There we find another smaller wall much is called Qafqauz or Mount Kauka or Mount Qauf pass. This wall has been made between two mountains. Bustani writes about it thus:

   "And near it is another barriers wall on route towards the western side, which the Persians probably built for protection against the Berbery from the north. The builder of this wall could not be ascetained. Some attributed it to Alexander the Great and sóme attributed it to Kisra (Caeser) or to Nausherwan. Yaqoot says this wall was prepared with melted copper and iron. In Encyclopaedia Britanica under the heading *Derbend* this iron wall has been described in more or less similar terms."

Because all these wall have been built towards the north side and because they were all built for the same purpose, there is quite a bit of doubt as to which is the wall of Zul Qarnain. Therefore we also find among the historians much difference of opinion is establishing. This difference of opinion has lead to an interesting situation: The name Derbend is connected to two of these places and both places have a barrier wall and the reason for the building of the wall was the same.

Hence leaving aside the great wall of China, the question arises as to which of the three walls is the wall built by Khorus (Zul Qarnain) and which *Derbend* is the right one.

The Qur'ãn and the Wall of Zul Qarnain

With regard to the wall built by Zul Qarnain the Qur'ãn mentions two important facts. The first is that it was built between two mountains and though it the pass between the two was closed up, through where the tribes of Yajooj and Majooj used to come to weak have and plunder upon other tribes of the area. As the Qur'ãn states:

> ".....until when he reached a tract between two mountains, He found there beneath them a people who scarcely understood a word
>
> They said: O Zul Qarnain the Yajooj and Majooj people do great mischief on earth.
>
> The second point is that the wall was not constructed from bricks, mortar or lime but from iron blocks which was mixed with molten lead:
>
> "I shall a strong barrier between you and them bring me blocks of iron. At length when he had

> filled up the space between the two mountain sides, the said:
>
> "Blow (with your bellows) then when he had made it red like fire, he said: bring me that I may pour over it molten lead." (18:96)

Now that we know these facts we have to consider which wall fits this description without any other changed interpretation.

The Wall of Zul Qarnain

Today's observations show that the pass of Daniyal is situated between two mountain peaks and history also accepts that. Moreover the Commission sent by the *Khalifa* Waathiq Billah have explained this is to be their observations that the wall was constructed of iron blocks and molten lead. Thus one is forced to accept that this was the wall executed by Zul Qarnain as is mentioned in *Surah al-Kahf.* Furthermore this is the only wall whose description concides with the two major points mentioned in the Qur'ãn. For this reason Wahb Aby Hayyaan, Ibn Khirdaad Allamah Anwar Shah Kashmiri and Moulana Azaad are agreed that the wall of Zul Qarnain is the one which was erected at the pass at Qaf Qauz.

After these submissions allow us to state that the wall at the pass of Daniyal i.e., the fourth of the barrier walls, is the one that was built by Cyrus (Khorus or Chorush, Khusru) and just as we have said in the case of the discussion on Yajooj and Majooj it was erected to keep out these wild tribes who came from the furthest regions of the Caucasia to loot and plunder among the peoples living beyond the mountains al Qaf Qauz. They were those Scythian tribes who used to launch their attacks in the time of Cyrus. The Yajooj and

Majooj of that time were these tribes. In Armenian writings its name is mentioned as "Phaak Korai" the pass of Kour. Perhaps this Kour is a reference to Khorush who which was the Faarsi name of Cyrus.

Other Barrier Walls

Near the above barrier wall another king built another one like it with the same purpose of Keeping out the wild tribes. This one was later renewed by Nausherwan as is mentioned in Encyclopaedia of Islãm. Among these barrier walls not one was built by Alexander the Great, because from the historical records of Alexander's conquests no where is their any mention of his having been called upon or having found the need to erect a wall to keep out enemies. Moreover there is also no mention of the tribes of Yajooj and Majooj having launched any attacks during his rule as king and emperor. Furthermore there is no record of his having come to *Derbend* where the local people made any complaints to him of such attacks or their request for a barrier wall.

The Exit of Yajooj and Majooj

After the discussion on Zul Qarnain, the wall and Yajooj and Majooj, the most important question remaining is the exit of Yajooj and Majooj about which the Qur'ãn gave the prophecy. This question has gained even more importance due to the fact that it is mentioned as one of the sings of the coming of *Qiyaamat*. It is a fact that the question of the exit of Yajooj and Majooj which the Qur'ãn gives as a prophecy of the coming of the day of *Qiyaamat* is not such a question which can be solved through theoretical analogies. And since in this questions the Qur'ãn deals with news of the Unseen, the Qur'ãn itself reserves the right to pass judgement on it

and not over theories or gives work. The Qur'ãn dealt with it in *Surah al-Kahf* and in *Surah al-Ambiyaa*—only in these two *Surahs*.

In *Surah al-Kahf* it states:

> "Thus they were made powerless to scale it or to dig through it. He said: "This is the a Mercy from my Lord. But when the promise of my Lord comes to pass, He will make it into dust.
>
> And the promise of my Lord is true.
>
> (*Al-Kahf*, P. 97-98)

In *Surah al-Ambiyaa* it says:

> "Until the people of Yajooj and Majooj are let through their barrier And they will swiftly swarm from every hill.
>
> Then will the true promise draw near (to fulfillment)
>
> Then behold, the eyes of the believers will fixedly stare in horror
>
> "Ah Woe to us, We were indeed heedless of this,
>
> Now we truly did wrong." (*Ambiyaa*, page 96-97)

In these two places the Qur'ãn explains that at the time when Zul Qarnain erected this wall against Yajooj and Majooj, its strength was such that those people could not break it down, neither scale over it, or make a hole in it through where to come through. Seeing the sturdiness of the barrier and its firmness, Zul Qarnain thanked Allah, saying that all this was a mercy from Allah who used him for this service.

The second point is that near the time of *Qiyaamat* Yajooj and Majooj will come out in innumerable numbers to spread through the world and will proceed to plunder and loot around, causing great devastation and distruction all over.

From these two points the *Mufassireen* have generally deduced the point that the barrier wall of Zul Qarnain will keep Yajooj and Majooj on the other side of the wall which will remain safe and sound till the day of *Qiyaamat* and when the time for the exit of Yajooj and Majooj comes along, at the time near *Qiyaamat*, the wall will fall down and disintegrate. So in both these places they have interpreted the verses accordingly. Hence in *Surah Ambiyaa* under the phrase "until such time as Yajooj and Majooj are let through......" They explain it to mean: "Until such time that Yajooj and Majooj will break down the wall and the path be opened....." They have in fact then joined it with the saying of Zul Qarnain: "But when the promise of My Lord comes to pass the will make it into dust. Then my Lord's promise will come and He will make it broken into pieces."

But when one looks at these verses, its sequence of events and consider the meaning of the verses, this interpretation does not give the complete meaning due to the verses.

The detail of this statement is this: that in *Surah al-Kahf* it only says that when Zul Qarnain had completed the iron wall, their considering how strong and firm it was at that moment, when Allah's promise comes to pass, this wall will be broken down into pieces and Allah's promise is the truth while it is impossible to otherwise. At that place there is no mention of the exist of Yajooj and Majooj which will happen near the time of *Qiyaamat*. These are the words of Zul Qarnain which he uttered regarding the strength and firmness of the

wall. The other facts regarding the exit of Yajooj and Majooj are neus of the Unseen which are mentioned as signs of the coming of *Qiyaamat* are words spoken by Allah and is a warning from Rasulullah ﷺ to the nations of the World viz., that this world in its last moments will face a universal and terrible happening of a dreadful nature.

In *Surah Ambiyaa* it is only mentioned that near the time of *Qiyaamat* Yajooj and Majooj will come out of their area and with great speed will spread forth him every high place, making mischief all along the way. At this place there is no mention of the wall becoming broken into pieces and no mention of the exit of Yajooj and Majooj and to understand this from the word "*Futihat*" is mere gueswork and *Qiyaas.*

Thus from the verses of *Surah al-Kahf* and *Surah Ambiyaa* the clear meaning is this that in *Surah al-Kahf* we first already had a detailed description of the story about which the Jews asked the Rasul through the Makkans that if you have any knowledge about Zul Qarnain, then till us about him. In response to that question the Qur'ãn through revelation from Allah explained that Zul Qarnain was a pious king. He undertook three major expeditions and campaigns, one to the east, one to the west and the third to the north. The third time he met a prophet who complained of the devastation and destruction caused to them by Yajooj and Majooj. They requested that a wall be built to keep these tribes away from them. Here Zul Qarnain closed up the path through which they used to come to perform their mischief by erecting a wall of iron blocks between the two mountains and strengthening it with molten lead. When it was complete Zul Qarnain thanked Allah. He also mentioned that at that time the wall was quite strong and firm that Yajooj and Majooj could not come through but he said further: "I do not make this claim that this wall will forever remain like that but it will only remain like that for as

long as Allah will allow it to be so. When he no longer intends that it shall be like that it will be broken down and like anything the wall too will perish.

Because the Jews only asked about Zul Qarnain, that is why some details have been given about him. Yajooj and Majooj are only mentioned by the way. In *Surah Ambiyaa* Allah is rejecting the claims of the *Mushrikeen* of Makkah and says that all these towns which had been destroyed, their inhabitants will not return alive to this world. When *Qiyaamat* comes along and it will come after the '*Fitnah*' of Yajooj and Majooj had come, then only will they come along alive once more to stand before Allah to be called to account.

Then because at this stage the exit of Yajooj and Majooj has been mentioned as a sign of *Qiyaamat* and given importance, the event was not made subject to the breaking down of the wall or its breaking down into pieces. In fact at this stage there is no mention of the wall. It merely says that when that promised exit takes place they (Yajooj and Majooj) will with great speed flow forth from every high place to all towns of the world.

Thus from joining these two verses together we can deduce the fact that before Yajooj and Majooj come out from beyond the wall of Zul Qarnain, the wall will certainly have broken down completely and secondly, that the time of their coming out will be very near the day of *Qiyaamat* after which will come the 'blowing of the trumpted' which will herald the momentous day. At that time all the tribes of Yajooj and Majooj will spring forth like flood waters to all over the world to commit all kinds of mischief.

In any case when Zul Qarnain said: "God when the promise of my Lord will come, He will make it into dust...." the promise does not refer to the promised exit of Yajooj

and Majooj but refers to the fact that a time will surely come when the wall will break down and disintegrate and in *Surah Ambiyaa* where Allah says: "Until the time when Yajooj and Majooj will be opened up, 'opened up' does not mean them breaking down the wall but means in fact that they will come out in such numbers as if they were previously closed up, and as if they were let out today.

The Arabs, when they use the word 'opened up' for living beings it generally means someone having been in a corner alone and now comes out of there suddenly. Thus when a person speaks about "locusts being opened up" it does not mean the locusts were kept closed in a confined area and were now let out. It means in fact that the locusts were confined to a mountainous corner somewhere and now suddenly they came out in great members. Hence in this place in the Qur'ãn it means that the great tribes of Yajooj and Majooj which for a long time were kept to themselves in a confined corner of the world now come flowing out of there in great numbers as if they were previously closed up and were now let loose.

Note: At this stage Maulana Hifzur Rahman Sedharwy discussed Yajooj and Majooj in the light of various *Hadith* on the subject and in the end he returned to the verdict of Maulana Anwar Shah Kashmiri for the last and final word on the subject.

The Tafseer of Allama Kashmiri

Allama Anwar Shah Kashmiri explained the meaning of the verse: "On that day We shall leave them to surge like waves on one another."

And says that because in this tory there is mention of putting a stop to the destructive activities of Yajooj and

Majooj, therefor Allah after mentioning the words of Zul Qarnain from His own side makes this announcement:

"O Listeners the tribes of Yajooj and Majooj about whom you have heard these things, listen to this also: "We have prestestined for them that they will remain busy with mutual combat among themselves and will continue to be involved with internecene fighting and this will continue to be involved with internecence fighting and this will continue until such time near the day of *Qiyaamat* when only the blowing of the trumpet will remain to be done, all these tribes will all together break out and flow over all corners of the world to bring about destruction and devastation. They will with great speed spread forth from every high place to lower ground.

"And they will swiftly swarm from every hill."

It speaks here of a hill— "*Hadab*"— which denotes high ground It also speak *Yansiloon* — to swarm and spread with speed.

In other words they will spread so fast as if something is flowing from a high place towards lower ground. This is the meaning given in the *Mufraddaat* of Imam Raghib and in *Nihayah* of Ibn Katheer.

From, the *Tafseer* this also becomes clear that the description which the Qur'ãn gives of the promised exit of Yajooj and Majooj fits the description of those tribes between the Caspian Sea and Manchuria which is the area of a very large proportion of the earth's people and in comparison with other parts of the world is situated on a high plateu of the earth so that when they should come out of these to attack other civilized nations it will appear as if they are spreading forth from high lands towards low lands therefore in future

also when as one of the signs of *Qiyaamat* they will come out for their last exit, all their tribes will suddenly burst forth and it will appear as if the large dam-wall around a reservoir of humanity has suddenly burst and broken down and now are swarming from every high place, spreading swiftly.

The Hadith of Bukhari and Muslim

Some *Mufassireen* have taken the verses from *Surah Ambiyaa* to be prophecy of the coming of the trials and tribulations which came over the Muslim world during the invasion by the Mangole. In this regard they also relied upon the famous *Hadith* of Bukhari where in it is said: "Woe upon the Arabs from an evil which has drawn near."

However that *Tafseer* is wrong and to seek confirmation for it from *Hadith* is also out of place because in Bukhari and Muslim there is another *Hadith* in '*Kitabul Fitan*' which clearly says: "When among the signs of the coming of *Qiyaamat*, the last sign shall appear, then first Hazrat Esa will descend from the heavens and *Dajjaal* will weak havoc on earth with his *Fitnah* and finally he will be killed at the hands of Hazrat Esa. Then after a time the exit of Yajooj and Majooj will take place and they will fill the whole world with their evil and mischief. Then after a while the trumpet will be blown and the while world will come to destruction." With this *Hadith* as our basis it is also wrong to state that the imperial domination of the English and the Russians or rather of all the European powers and their imperial control of other nations is actually the exit of Yajooj and Majooj. This is wrong because in the first place it is wrong to call civilized nations Yajooj and Majooj. Secondly, bearing in mind the evil and mischief to be committed by them, and bearing in mind the things that will happen after their exist what has been prophesied as a sing of the coming of *Qiyaamat* and which

has been described as terrible and dread full so much so that these coming events will have nothing to do with civilized behaviours but will be completely wild, savage-like and barbaric. There is a great difference between modern day scientific warfare and uncivilized, barbaric warfare.

Moreover the warfare and battles of civilized nations—no matter have barbaric it may become, still it is fought on scientific principles and on fixed principles of warfare. This has always been observed among nations. Furthermore if the Qur'ãn was going to refer to civilized conquests by forceful and oppressive means as a prophecy of what is to come, it would not have chosen the type of wording to describe the promised exit of Yajooj and Majooj as is used in *Surah Ambiyaa.*

In conclusion, if we try to bring about reconciliation between the verses of the Qur'ãn and the *Hadith* on the subject, it is necessary that before these happenings take place, the descent of Nabi Esa ﷺ from the heavens should first take place and not that Yajooj and Majooj should first come out. Therefore the exit of Yajooj and Majooj does not fit the description of those nations (English, Russians, Tatars), who had been responsible for tyrannical and despolic rule after involent conquests of a large part of the world.

Was Zul Qarnain a Nabi?

The question arises: Was Zul Qarnain a Nabi or a pious King? The preferred verdict is that he was a righteous and pious man, a pious king and that he was not a *Nabi.*

Lessons and Warnings

1. Allah does not grant sovereignty and wealth to any one so that he may use it for his own comfort and benefit,

but granted it to man that he may use these things in the service of the creation.

2. There has always been this major difference between a just government and an unjust government that the aim of the just government is always to serve the subjects. For this reason the treasury of such a king is used for the good and welfare of the subjects and for promoting their prosperity and will only use from there for his own needs that which is necessary and such a ruler will not harass them with an over burden of taxes. On the other hand the unjust tyrant aims at benefiting the rule of the government, their own comforts and pleasures and strengthening these things. Thus such a ruler is oblivious of their pains and does not care about their comforts and even if any comforts do come to the subjects it is merely by the way. In such a government the subjects always have the burden of taxes and in such a country the majority of people are in poverty.

Note from Who Abridged this Work

The researches of Maulana Hifzur Rahman Seoharwny on Zul Qarnain is discussed over one hundred and twenty one pages, which is a good yardstick of his investigation into the matter. Effort has been made to give a concise version of that research in such a way that no important fact is left out. Yet it took forty pages. It is possible that some persons having looked at the concise version may feel a thirst for the whole discussion. To them we appeal that they should refer to the original book, because the long quotation from the Torah and from historical sources and the various opinions made it very difficult to give a true abridged version. Hence we only mentioned those results which Maulana reached after his

investigations. Whatever Maulana wrote under 'lessons', the majority of points do not deal directly with the story of Zul Qarnain. But those points are still very important. This section is actually more important for the *Ahle-Fikr*. Therefore this section is noted down separately.

Lessons

1. Just as it is important that to understand the true meanings of the Qur'ãnic verses that one should have adequate knowledge of the language, the meaning of Arabic words, eloquence, *Sarf* and *Nahu*, *Hadith* and *Athaar* of the *Sahaabah*, so also is it necessary to have solid knowledge of history also. In this regard the Qur'ãn has encouraged us to acquire lessons from the stories of previous nations. Allah says:

   "Say : Travel through the earth

   And see what was the end of those who rejected truth." (6:11)

   And "Many were the ways of life that have passed away before you. Travel through the earth and see what was the end of those who rejected truth." (3:137)

2. As for as Islãmic basic principles are concerned the verdicts of the saintly Elders unquestionably is the right path and to divert from there is to stray from truth. However as far as the finer points of the Qur'ãn are concerned, and the secret points thereof and finer points of academic interest, no time comes along when these are exhausted. Rasulullah ﷺ said: "The finer points of the Qur'ãn and its wisdom will never end."

The Story of the As-Haabil Kahf

Kahf means a cave in a mountain but as for the meaning of the word "*Raqeem*" about it the *Mufassireen* have a difference of opinion. But about something there is a strong opinion viz., that it is a name of a town which used to be the capital for the people of Banu Nabit bin Ismail whose era was from 700 B.C. to 106 B.C. It is said it lies north of the gulf of Aqaba (Eelah) where two parallel ranges of mountains meet. This tribe used to live on one of those mountainous regions and used to be called *al-Raqeem* (modern day Aerah or Batra). Present day excavation in and around the area are taking place to discover its ancient origins Among the discoveries brought to light by these excavations is that a strange cave was found in the mountains. This cave is quite wide and situated at such a spot that the rays of the sun and its heat does not reach it. Another cave was discovered around the mouth of which were found some ruins of some ancient buildings of which many ruins of pillars were still present. It seems as if these were the ruins of an ancient temple or place of worship.

So actually we may say that the many discoveries made in this region through excavations, are a confirmation word

by word of the words of the Qur'ãn. Similarly it becomes easy to say that the companions of the cave which is mentioned in *Surah Kahf* is a story of one of the caves of the city of al-Raqeem or Perah.

> (Maulana Hifzur Rahman after a long discussion on the issue clarified that the companions of the cave and the companions of al-Raqeem were one and the same people. He also pointed out that the story mentioned in Bukhari Shareef about some companions and a cave refers to some people from Banu Israel. Maulana also pointed out that the story of the *Ashaabil Kahf* is one which deals with the early days of Christianity.)

The Qur'ãn and the As-Haabil Kahf

As has been mentioned in the story of Zul Qarnain, the Jewish scholars had asked three questions to Rasulullah ﷺ through the delegation of Quraish. One of those questions was: Who were the companions of the cave and what happened to them? Rasulullah ﷺ awaited the coming of revelation and after its arrival he recited *Surah Kahf* to them to clarify the matter:

> Allah says: "Do you aflect that the companions of the cave and the Inscription were among our signs?
>
> Behold the youths betook themselves to the cave
>
> They said: "Our Lord, bestow on us mercy from yourself
>
> And dispose of our affair for us in the right way."

Then we draw a veil over their ears for a number of years in the cave (so that they hear not).

Then We roused them in order to test which of the parties was best at calculating the term of years they tarried!

We relate to you their story in truth:

They were youths who believed in their Lord.

And we advanced them in guidance.

We gave strength to their heart behold they stood up and said: "Our Lord is the Lord of the heavens and the earth. Never shall We call upon any God other than Him.

If we did we should indeed have uttered on enormity."

These our people have taken for worship gods other than Him.

Why do they not bring forward an authority?

Clear (and concerning) for what they do?

Who does more wrong than he who invents a falsehood against Allah?

When you turn away from them and the things

They worship other than Allah, betake yourselves to the cave

Your Lord will shower His mercies upon you

And dispose of your affair towards comfort and ease.

You would have seen the sun when it rose declaring to the right from their cave

And when it set, turning away from them to the left while they lay in the midst of the Cave

Such are among the signs of Allah

He whom Allah guides is rightly guided

But he whom Allah leaves to stray

For him will you find no protector to lead him to the right way.

You would have deemed them awake, while they were asleep,

And we turned them on their right and on their left sides, their dog stretching forth his two fore-legs on the thresh-hold

If you had come up to them, you would certainly have turned back from them in flight,

And would certainly have been filled with terror of them.

Such (being their state) We raised them up (from sleep), that they might question each other.

Said one of them: "How long have We stayed here?

They said: "We have stayed (perhaps) a day or part of a day."

At length they (all) said: "Allah alone knows how long you have stayed here. Now send you one of you with this money of yours to the town.

Let him find out which is the best food (to be had) and bring some to you that you may satisfy your hunger therewith. And let him behave with care and courtesy.

And let him not inform anyone about you.

"For if they should come upon you, they would

stone you or force you to return to their cult.

And in that case you would never attain prosperity.'

Thus did we make their case known to the people.

That they might know the promise of Allah is true

And that there can be no doubt about the our of Judgement

Behold they dispute among themselves to their affair

Some said: "Construct a building over them"

Their Lord Knows best about them.

These who prevailed over their affair said:

"Let us surely build a a place of worship over them."

Some say they were three; the dog being the fourth among them.

(Others) Say: they were five, the dog beings the sixth, doubtfully guessing at the unknown.

(Yet others) say: They were seven, their dog being the eighth.

Say you: "My Lord knows best their number.

It is but few that know (their real case)

Enter not therefore into controversies concerning them except on a matter that is clear.

Nor consult any of them about the affair of the sleepers.

> Do not say of anything: I shall be sure to do so and so tomorrow without adding, "So please Allah."
>
> And call your Lord to mind when you forget and Say:
>
> "I hope that my Lord will guide me ever closer.
>
> Even than this, to the right road."
>
> So they stayed in their cave three hundred years and nine more
>
> Say: "Allah knows best how long they stayed.
>
> With Him is (the Knowledge of) the secrets of the heavens and the earth: How clearly He sees and how finely
>
> He hears (everything). They have no protector other than Him, nor does He share His command with any person whatsoever."
>
> (18:8—26)

Maulana Hifzur Rahman in his own words tells the above story thus.

The history of the Ismaili Arabs show that these Arabs for a considerable time remained on the religion of Nabi Ibraheem, but gradually as the years passed and through their contact with nations from the neighbouring countries and peoples they fell under the influences of the Egyptians, Syrians and Iraqi peoples with their polytheistic tendencies. Thus through their contact with these peoples and through the means of one, Amr bin Luhay they also started adopting aspects of idol-worship and worship of the heavenly bodies. Not long afterwards they were completely involved with idol-worship. And so even the children of Thaabit bin Qays were involved with idol-worship and their most famous idols were

Laat, Uzza, Manaat, Hubal, Kus-ah, myaans and Hareesh. For many centuries the Nabateans were involved with this idol-worship. Then during the early era of Christianity at the capital city of Al-Raqeem a strange incident took place the following being the details:

It was during the early era of Christianity that the religion was spreading in the Nabaty kingdom. It so happened that a few young men of exemplary character became dis illustioned with idol-worship and turned towards the religion of the One God, and adopted the new religion. Soon this news reached the king who called the youths to his court to inquire about the situation. In spite of his threats they remained steadfast and brave. The king greatly disapproved of their courage and postponed the matter for a while to allow them more time to re-think about their actions. It was during this time that the youths decided among themselves to securely make their way into a cave in the mounains and to hide them from the anger of the king, and so that they could in secret proceed with their worship of Allah. As they entered the cave they fell asleep lying down in the cave. There they lay changing from one side to the other.

The cave was quite big and there was provision for air to flow in from one side and exit on the other. Moreover the cave was situated from a northerly direction towards a southernly direction with the result that the sun's rays did not penetrate into the centre of the cave. However light used to enter daily. So it was not dark in the cave, neither did it feel the full blast of the sun. And so they lay in the cave while their dog lay with his legs out-stretched at the mouth of the cave.

For many years they lay asleep in the cave. In the meantme the situation in the town changed completely. The Romans captured the town and so as the Romans had accepted

Christianity, the religion also became the religion of Raqeem i.e., Perah. Then they woke up asking each other how long they had remained asleep. They were under the impression that the sleep had lasted for merely a day or a part of a day. They then decided to send one of them down to the town to buy food. However the one who went had to take care that the people did not find out about them and who they were, fearing that some harm may come to them from these who may wish to force them into a religion of idol-worship.

It so happened that one of them took some money and left the cave for the town to buy food. He was surprised to find the whole world had changed with only new and unknown persons around. Finally he came to a shop where he bought some food stuffs but at the time of paying for them, the shopkeeper realized he is paying with very old coins. This led to them discovering who he was. They welcomed him and took great interest in their strang story.

They told him that for a long time the rule of the previous tyrant King had ended while the whole population had embraced Christianity. Although he was greatly pleased not the triumph of Christianity he still preferred the solitude for himself and his companions. Somehow he avoided the people and returned to his companions to tell them the true situation. Finally the towns fold discovered the tend and tried to get them to come and love among them so that the people could benefit from their company. However they refused and continued to live the rest of their lives in an ascetic manner in the remembrance of Allah. When these pious people passed away the people decided to erect something in their remembrance. The people who had influence among them decided to erect a memorial building for worship in the cave. Hazrat Abdullah bin Abbaas ﷺ reports that the-

King of the time and the public followed the young man up the mountain, but when they reached a spot near the cave, they could not discover which direction the young man had taken. Finally after a long search they could not find the cave and returned and in the mountain they erected a building of worship in the remembrance of the companions of the cave.

Points of Tafseer

The Qur'ãn states:

> "Then we roused them in order to test which of the two parties were best in calculating the term of years they had tarried." (18:12)

1. By these two parties are meant (a) the companions of the cave and (b) party of the inhabitants of the town. This was done for the purpose of showing the period that they had been asleep that they may know that Allah kept them alive all those years even though they were deprived of the means for staying alive. From this people were to realize that in similar fashion he will bring the dead to life and that they may know that the resurrection of *Qiyaamat* is true. At that time there was a controversy over the resurrection among the people. One group believed that the rising from the dead will be only the soul. The other group contended that resurrection would be for the soul and the body. This was the difference of opinion among the Christians. On the other hand were the Nabati polytheists who did not believe in resurrection at all. At such a time Allah roused them from sleep to show that in similar fashion will He raise up the dead after being intered into their graves for many years.

"And thus did we make their case Known to people that they might Know that the promise of Allah is true and that there can be no doubt about the Hour of Judgement." (18:21)

2. The Qur'ãn also says: "(O Messenger) Some people say they were three, the dog being the fourth. Others say they were five, the sixth being their dog, doubtfully guessing at the unknown. Yet others say they were seven, the dog being the eighth."

In this story Allah revealed what was necessary for the major object of the story i.e., for bringing on awareness in Allah's power and the rising of the dead from their graves. For that purpose all the necessary details have been given. Now it advises Rasulullah ﷺ not to concern him with unnecessary other details which is of no use knowing. For example how many were they,' how old were they? How long did they reside in the cave? etc.

Allah says:

"Say O Muhammad, Allah knows best their number. It is but few who know their (real case). Enter therefore not into controversies concerning them, except on a matter that is clear.

Nor consult any of them about (the affair of) the sleepers." (18:22)

3. Allah says: "So they stayed in the cave three hundred years and add nine (more) this verse is generally translated in this manner that Allah informs us that the *As-Haabul Kahf* remained asleep for 309 years.

However the opinion of Abdullah bin Abbas ﷺ and Abdullah bin Masood ﷺ is this that this is actually the opinion

expressed by people who were previously guessing about their number. In other words this is a continuation of the saying of the people. In other words those people are expressing their own opinions as to how they remained in the cave.

Maulana Hifzur Rahman also favours this interpretation. He says Allah already advised Rasulullah ﷺ not to involve himself in such useless controversies and it thus seems that the question as to how long they larried is another of these arrows at the unknown. Such matters should be left to Allah's knowledge.

4. The Qur'ãn after describing the whereabouts of the cave says: "Such are among the signs of Allah."

This refers to the overall setting of the cave and even though the mouth of the cave is quite small, inside it is quite wide. It is situated from north to south which means that both at the times of sunrise and sunset the sun's rays would either pass on the right or left side of the cave's mouth—not directly into it, while on the other hand light and warnth would reach it as is required. In other words what is required for sustaining life viz., is allowed to enter as is required and what could cause harm viz., the direct rays of the sun is kept out.

5. Generally it is still believed the Companions of the Cave are still alive and still sleeping. This is not correct because according to a report by Abdullah bin Abbas ؓ they have passed away.

6. The Qur'ãn also says: ".....Their dog stretching forth his two legs on the threshold." This dog of theirs has shown its faithfulness and was blessed with the companionship of the pious. Hence the Qur'ãn also honours it and makes it an enviable achievement for human beings.

(18:18)

The Story of Saba

The background to the rise and fall of nations is not governed by mere chance or in a haphazard manner, but is something that is subject to specific Divine principles. Sometimes the causes for a nations rise or fall are so clear and self-evident that any novice may recognise them easily and sometimes these causes are different from the generally accepted reasons and is based upon obedience and disobedience to Allah's laws. It may also be that in a nation the same conditions are present which would result in another nation's rising but (for some reason or other) this nation will suddenly face destruction and become an example and warning for others. Hence when a nation becomes involved with rebellion and disobedience against Allah and disregard for the commands emanating from Him then in accordance with Allah's law of Retribution for evil deeds, it could be that these people will face destruction and loss and in such a case their fall will not be a matter of chance or hard luck, but be completely in accordance with Allah's holy law of Retribution.

The story of the people of Saba which is being told here is such a story filled with warning telling of the rise and fall of a nation as a result of this later type of causes. History teaches us that the nation which lives a comfortable

and prosperious life of happiness and fearlessly spend their lives in luxury and then becomes involved in disobedience, then their all into destruction is not a mere matter of chance or hard luck but as a result of the law of Retribution.

The People of Saba

Saba is one of the well-known Tribes of the Qahtani nation, bearing in mind that Qahtan is connected to Um Samiyah. However there is some difference of opinion whether they were of the off-spring of the children of Ismail and whether Qahtanis and Adnanis were of the same off-spring. Arab historians state that Saba in another name for Amr or Abdi Shams. The modern historians look upon this as being correct and also say that in the understanding of the word Saba the aspect of trade is included therein and because Saba were merchants and as such they became known s the people of Saba.

Saba and their Stages of Rule

According to the historians the people of Saba had two stages of their rule, and each of these stages is divided into separate stages. The first stage of rule was from 1100 B.C., until 550 B.C. This was the era of their rise. It was during this stage and conciding with the period of Nabi Sulaiman ﷺ when the Queen of Sheba, Bilqees was at the head. The second stage of this first era lasted from 550 B.C. until 115 B.C. The period of the floods of Iram and the dispersal of the people of Saba happened during this period.

The second era started about 115 B.C. and finished in 535 A.D. The Qur'ãn speaks about the people of Tubba' in *Surah Dukhan* and in *Surah Qaaf*. This people are connected with this era. In short we may say that the 8th

century before Christ was the period when the people of Saba were the people of noted among the Arabs.

The Civilization of Saba

Both the historians, ancient as well as modern have written about the grand buildings of Saba. It is said that the royal palace at Ghamadan was an engineering master-piece. (see a description of it further on). This palace consisted of twenty storeios and the top storey was constructed of precious crystal glass. It has already been mentioned in the story of Nabi Sulaiman عليه السلام. Apart from this one there were other unique grand buildings. And during the kingdom of Saba there were gold mines producing gold. Moreover the areas of Hadramount and Yemen were also noted for producing fragrance and the pearls of Oman and Bahrain were considered to be second to none in the world. The coastal areas of Yemen was a market for the whole area and Trade was carried on with Syria, Egypt, Europe, India and China. In the Torah there is frequent mention of the riches and prosperity of the people of Saba.

The Dam of Ma'aarib

A river is something non-existent in the Arabian peninsula. Most of the time people depend upon rainwater for their needs and in some places their are fountains in the mountains. Whether it is rain water or water from fountains, these flow along and becomes absorbed by the desert sands and so becomes evaperated and lost. The people of Saba constructed over a hundred dams for the purpose of storing and retaining water for irrigating their lands and orchards and to keep these fertile all over Yemen. In this way the whole country became fertile, green and prosperous. Of all these

dams the greatest dam was the dam of Ma'arib which was constructed in the capital city of Ma'aarib.

From the description given by ancient and modern historians about this dam we come to deduce the fact that the builders of Saba were quite well acquainted with the arts of engineering and construction. Towards the south of Ma'aarib on the right end left side there are two mountains which are known as Mount Ablaq. Between these two mountains there is a very long and wide valley known as Waadi Ithniyah. When rain false in this area or when water flows out of fountains, this valley becomes like a river. The people of Saba saw this and around the year 800 B.C. they built a wall across the valley and constructed a dam. For quite a long time they remained busy constructing this dam wall.

Some Arab historians state that the dam itself was two miles square. The author of the book Ardul Qur'ãn quoted a European traveller who wrote that the dam wall was 150 feet long and 50 feet wide, of which the major section had by then become broken down and destroyed. One third of it still remains till today. They author further writes that this traveller drew a beautiful sketch and printed it with his article which was printed in the Journal of the French Aseatic Society. This has also been printed the book Ardul Qur'ãn.

Arab Historians also inform us that the dam was so constructed that after storing the water in the dam, in view of different needs for water for irrigation purposes the water used to be stored in three diffirent layers and in every storey of water there used to be three windows as outlets through which the water used to be allowed to leave and when these were closed the water stayed inside. Then at the bottom there was a huge storage dam on the right and left side of which these used to be two huge sluice gates through which the

water was despatched to various parts of Ma'aarib, through canals and channels. Through this smartly constructed reservoir lands were irrigated for an area of 300 Square miles to water the date orchards, the beautiful gardens of fruits and vegetables, the fragrant lands of flowers, as well as the fragrant trees and gardens. So fertile and luscious did these things grow that the whole world around there became changed into a garden of paradise.

Because Yemen was a land of abundance in fragrant scents, fruits and flowers and because it was granted great wealth in mineral resources of gold, silver and other minerals there was a general abundance of wealth and trade; All this served to make the people of Saba quite prosperous and living a life of comfort and ease and continuous happiness as they continued to enjoy Allah's bounties and favours. Moreover their surroundings being like a garden of paradise, the weather being very moderate, the people were safe in the absence of mosquites, flies and fleas which could possibly cause them any harm.

The Qur'ãn describes the people of Saba as having two gardens with them one on the right and one on the left.

In any case their lives were so comfortable that when they travelled from Yemen to Syria in their trade caravans on the highways they used to move around with the shade of fragrant trees like communion trees around them on the right and the left. So comfortable was their journeys made that the caravan always carried with it cool waters and fresh fruits, so that en route they hardly felt that a journey was being undertaken and when their carvan stopped among other carvans the others used to envy then for the comforts they enjoyed. We have already seen how the other people used to mention their prosperity and comforts, which Allah had granted them.

We will now look at those verses of the Qur'ãn wherein Allah mentions his special favours upon the people of Saba.

Allah says:

> "There was the people of Saba a sign in their home land: two gardens to the right and to the left. (Allah said to them): "Eat of the sustenance provided by your Lord and be grateful to Him; a territory fair and happy And a lord oft, forgiving." (35:15)

In this verse Allah explain that the people of Saba had a wonderful sing of Allah's right inside their home-town, in that for many miles around them a the right and left there were fruit trees and fragrance producing trees in orcharous and gardens. All this was Allah's gift to them of special sustenance.

Hence it was obligatory on the people of Saba to express their gratitude towards Allah for these gifts which they enjoyed without any special efforts on their part. If they did that and connected themselves firmly with Allah then not only would they have gained worldly prosperity but also be entitled to acquire a place of honour in the hereafter.

Their Disobedience to Allah

For some Time the people of Saba continued to look upon these bounties as favours from Allah, appreciating them as such. They continued to carry out the commands of Allah. However, as time passed their wealthy position and prosperity, luxury and comforts started to create within them bad characteristics like arrogance and pride. This bad turn detariorated until they ever went so far as to cast aside the true religion and turned over the *Kufr* and *Shirk*.

Allah did not immediately punish them but gave them a period of respite while Allah's messengers tried to call them to the path of truth. They tried to make them realize that the favours of Allah were not meant for them to become drunk with the enjoyment there of and to discard proper manner and character and also not for the sake of becoming rebels against Allah. If that is what they did, it was a bad way they had chosen for themselves.

Muhammad bin Ishaaq reports on the authority of Ibn Munnabbah that during this time Allah sent 13 *Nabees* (*Alaihimus Salãm*) to them, but they paid no attention. They looked upon their prosperity as a birth-right which they inherited and continued their acts of '*Kufr*' and '*Shirk*'.

In the end history repeated itself and they faced the same result which others previous to them were made to experience.

The Flood of 'Iram

Therefore Allah sent over them two forms of punishment as a result of which their paradise like gardens and orchards were destroyed and in the place of that desert like plants and thorn bushes started to grow as if to bear witness that such is the end result of those who rebel against Allah with disobedience.

The First Punishment

It so happened that the magnificent reservoir which they had constructed and which irrigated an area of 300 square miles and of which they were very proud, as it transformed the whole environment into beautiful, fertile pastures and fields and made Yemen a veritable rose-garden, that reservoir at Allah's command burst open and its waters suddenly flooded the whole valley and spread over the gardens and

drowned everything in its wake and destroyed every thing. And when the waters dried up, the gardens of the area between the two mountains was transformed into an area of reeds, and thorn bushes and desert trees, the fruits of which were exceedingly bitter.

When this punishment came upon the people of Saba and Ma'aarib all their strength and power could not stop the destruction. Their knowledge of engineering and the art of dam construction was of no use. For them there was no other way out but to leave their beloved land and disperse to other areas.

The Qur'ãn has taken these events and called upon the man with eyes and ears to see and hear to take note thereof. And Allah says:

> "But they turned away (from Allah) and we sent against them the flood (released) from the dams. And we converted their two garden (rows) into gardens producing bitter fruit and tamarisks and some few (stunted) lote-trees.
>
> That was the requital we gave them because they rejected faith And never do we give such requital except to such as are ungrateful rejecters."
>
> (34:16—17)

Just think for a while why and how this flood came? Was it because the dam had become ancient and broken down? No, because if it was in need of repair there were still sufficient men and engineers with adequate knowledge of the art of dam construction. Moreover they had continued to construct various other dams in various other parts of the country of Saba. And even if the dam had burst open through old age and being broken down, one would have expected them to have

taken such precautions with such a construction that even if it should burst open, the flood waters would not cause such damage. The next question is: Why did this flood come? It is because they knew that the dam would burst open in the near future and inspite of knowing that they were unmindful there of and paid no attention. This is also untrue because history tells us that the people of Saba were completely at ease as far as the strength of the reservoir was concerned and with all the safety measures attached to it.

The truth of the matter is that history, both ancient and modern, is completely silent as to the causes of this terrible event. This calamity descended upon Saba suddenly and unexpected which surprised them all. They were made to realise the Divine Hand in it, because the thought, that outwardly the sturdiness of the dam and the various preparation showed no shortcomings. Thus for this dam to suddenly burst open, flooding the whole valley with water and destruction must have been from Allah's side.

Hence when they changed their permissible life of comfort towards luxury filled lives filled with evil, when they failed to express thanks for Allah's bounties and favours and instead adopted an attitude of pride and arrogance, when they discarded the teachings of the prophets and continued to persist in '*Kufr* and *Shirk*', it was the punishment of Allah which brought destruction to them.

The Second Punishment

After the breaking down of the reservoir at Ma'aarib the inhabitants of the town became dispersed all over in various areas. That was, however, not the end of their punishment. This is because not only did the people of Saba adopt an arrogant attitude in showing ingratitude for the favours of Allah and

opting for *Kufr* and *Shirk*, but they had been used to travel from Yemen to Syria along comfortable routes with such comfortable stopping places that they hardly could know the obstacles of travel. During those journeys they had become used to cold water at their disposal at all times with fragrant scents and sweet fruits readily available.

They had failed to be thankful for these favours and like Bani Israel they pulled up their noses and said: "What kind of life is this that a person should take to the road and that it should not be known to him whether he is on a journey or at home? What a fortunate and courageous man is it who takes to the road and suffers all manners of hardships, and lives for the acquiring of water, food and drink and because of not having the pleasure of having the means towards comforts and instead profers to taste the obstacles of travel. Alas that we may travel such a journey that me may experience the feeling of travelling to far places while we live with the obstacles, differentiating between travelling and staying at home.

The ungratefulness of the unfortunate people's reached such a state that in their desires and aspirations they were actually inviting upon themselves Allah's wrath and punishment while being completely unmindful of the results of their actions.

In this state of their ungratefulness Allah sent upon their another punishment in that all along the route from Yemen to Syria the whole world became cleared of all inhabitants all the towns and villages near to each other all the caravan stops and the commercial and trading posts in between which used to serve the travellers on their journeys and saw to their comforts and to remove all their obstacles all these places became devoid of all inhabitants. The whole area became filled and covered in dust and empty of people.

In the Qur'ān Allah describes this scene:

> "Between them and the cities on which we poured our blessings,
>
> We had placed cities in prominent positions and between them We had appointed stages of journey in due proportions: "Travel therein, secure by night and by day."

But they said:

> "Our Lord! place longer distances between our journey stages", But they wronged themselves therein.
>
> At length we made them as a tale (that is told) And we dispersed them All in scattered fragments,
>
> Verily in this are signs for every (soul that is)
>
> Patiently constant and grateful." (34:18—19)

The historians state that is opposition to the people of Saba, the Romans for a long time desired to have trade links with Africa and India like the Arabs had so that by directly trading with these coumtries they too can reap the benefits. However the Arabs never gave them a chance and the Arabs jealously held onto those coastal areas for trade. But in the 1st Century before Christ the Romans started capturing Egypt & Syria one after the other and now they were able to reach their aims and objects. However the Arabs had built highways to and from the trading centres. These were land routes and anyone wishing to use these highways had to come past the Arabs, which the Romans feared. Hence the Romans decided to adopt the sea-route to the trading posts in Africa and India. In this way they had their ships sailing in the Red Sea to

affload their goods in the harbours of Egypt and Syria. This led to the result that the new trading routes caused the new settlements of Saba to be destroyed and within a few days these places became dust covered and dispersed. Some went away to Syria and others to Oman or Iraq. Others went to settle in Hijaz, others to Najd; others to Bahrain. This caused to government of Saba to break down with the result that they became a story to be told, a people broken into pieces.

> "Look at Me, you who have an eye taking warnings
>
> Listen to me with an ear looking for advice."

The Extent of the Flood of 'Iram

We must clarify that the flood of 'Iram did not come over the whole of Yemen but only directly affected the capital city Ma'aarib and its vicinity, but its destruction spread for many miles around. Only these people who were directly affected by the floods were forced to leave their home-towns and to settle elsewhere. However when the second punishment came the whole of Yemen was affected and the other tribes of Saba were also faced to disperse. This brought about the end of the government of Saba.

The Religious Condition of Saba

The light thrown upon this subjected by the Qur'ãn in *Surah Saba*, we come to know that in their higher ranks the people of Saba used to be sun worshippers or true Judaism. In the lower stages they became idol worshippers which was the national religion. At some times in their history some aspects of Christianity and Judaism were to be seen among them.

A Few Point of Tafseer

The story of Ma'aarib and Yemen which had been described above has become an example to the peoples of this world. The special condition of their land was the result of Allah's special favour on them and for this reason Allah called it one of this special sings.

(a) "Verily for the people of Saba, their homeland was a wonderful sign of Allah's power—two gardens on the right and the left."

(b) "Good was their town and their Lord generous."

Thereafter Allah says:

(c) "Then they turned away from Allah."

From these two sentences we deduce that the people of Saba were First Muslims but slowly and gradually they adopted '*Kufr*' as is also clear from the following sentence: "And for this we took revenge against them." (17:34)

In the story on Nabi Sulaiman ﷺ we mentioned that the people of Saba accepted Islam around 950 B.C. For centuries they attached themselves to this religion, but like other nations before them, they also turned away from obedience. Then Allah's Messengers came towards them or sent their representatives to call them to the path of guidance. However like those other nations, they also cast Allah's favours behind their backs. This was why one century before the coming of Jesus, the floods of Iram came upon them and destroyed the whole generation of Saba.

Results and Lessons

In the Qur'ãn has adopted four manners of giving admonition and advice:

1) Reminding of His favours: In other words He mentions His favours on mankind and through that directs man towards following His commandments. In *Surah al-A'raaf.*

He says:

> "So, remember Allah's favour so that you may be successful." (7:29)
>
> "So, remember Allah's favour and do not commit mischief in the land." (7:74)

2) Reminding them of 'the days of Allah'. This means that by mentioning the circumstances of previous nations to show the success attained by those who obeyed and followed His guidance and also to show that these who became disobedient and rebellious against His orders and how this led to their destruction. In other words, by mentioning the rise and fall of nations and the conditions which led to this a warning and advice is given to mankind.

3) Warning with the Signs of Allah: In other words drawing attention to the glorious power of Allah as the Creator of the Universe through some of His Signs, thereby calling towards the recognition of His Oneness and thereby calling for acceptance of His truth and acceptance of the truth of His Messengers.

He says:

> "And in the heavens and the earth are numerous Signs of Allah by which they pass "unmindfully without paying any attention." (12:105)

4) Warning by what is to follow after death. In show words admonishing mankind by mentioning the

> '*Barzakht*' and *Qiyamat*. In *Surah Qauf* Allah says: "And with the Qur'ān admonish that person who fears Allah's warnings (of Allah's punishment after death)." (50:45)

This story of Saba is connected with the 'warnings of the days of Allah." It is told to remind us that when any nation enjoys the favours of Allah and lives in comforts and prosperity and then turns away from Allah's obedience, then He first of all grants them a period of respite and in order to grant them the opportunity to come onto the right path. Now if at this final chance granted to them, they again adopt disobedience and rebellion, and continues to disregard His favours then His law of seizing the guilty ones comes into operation and such an unfortunate nation is destroyed. In such a way such a nations story becomes a mere story to be told and remembered.

> "Say: Travel in the land and see the end result of the evil-doers." (27:69)

The Ashabul Ukhdood

'Khad' or 'Ukhdood' means a hole in the ground or a trench. The plural of it is '*Akhaadeed*'. Because of the fact that in the story under discussion the *Kafir* king and his main courtiers of the kingdom had dag huge trenches wherein they lit fires and into which they threw believing Christians, for this reason they became known as the "Companions of the trenches."

The Qur'ãn and the Ashabul Ukhdood

In *Surah Burooj* the story of the *Ashabul Ukhdood* is told in its inimitable way:

> "In the Name of Allah, Most Gracious, Most Merciful.
>
> (I swear) By the Sky (displaying the Zodiacal Signs).
>
> And by the promised day (of Judgement)
>
> By one that witnesses and the subject of the witness.

Woe to the makers of the pit (of fire)

Fire supplied (abundantly) with fuel:

Behold they sat over against the (Fire)

And they witnessed (all) that they were doing against the believers.

And they ill-treated them for no reason other than they believed in God exalted in power worthy of all Praise!

Him to whom belongs the dominion of the heavens and the earth.

And Allah is witness to all things.

Those who persecute (or draw into temptation) the believing men and women

And do not turn in repentance will have the penalty of Hell.

They will have the Penalty of the burning Fire.

For those who believe and do righteous deeds will be Gardens

Beneath which streams flow. That is the Great Salvation (the fulfilment of all desires).

The Details of the Story

With regard to the *Tafseer* of these verses the *Mufasireen* have quoted various stories. Maulana Hifzur Rahman discussed all these stories in detail and in the end came to the conclusion that in accordance with the view of *Muqaatil*, the *Tabi'ee*, The story to which reference is made in these verses refer to Najran and Thu Nawaas. This is also the opinion of the research scholars. The incident is quoted by Ibn Ishaq on the authority of Muhammad bin Kaab ﷺ.

He says:

> "The settlement between Hijaz and Syria which is well-known as Najran was one consisting of idol-worshippers and polytheists. Near them there lived a sorcerer who used to teach the young men of Najran sorcery.
>
> After a time a monk came to live in a tent nearby.

Wahb bin Munabbah says: "His name was Maymoon. Among the boys who had learned sorcery there was one called Abdullah bin Taamur One day Abdullah visited the monk's tent. The monk was busy with his daily prayers. Seeing this the boy became greatly impressed with this form of *Ibaadah* and he visited him frequently, beginning also to learn his *Deen*. Finally he accepted the faith. He continued to study the *Deen* until he became an *A'alim*. He then begged the monk to teach him the '*Imnul A'tham*'. The Monk delayed with the excuse that he fears the boy with will not be able to bear the responsibility as he found him yet weak. The boy remained silent. In the meantime the boy's father still believed the he was learning sorcery from the sorcerer.

The boy remained quite for a couple of days. Then he thought the monk is being stingy. He then took arrows of sweetmeats and on every one of the arrows wrote a name of God. Then he lit a fire and cast the arrows one by one into the fire. One by one the arrows burnt. But one arrow struck the fire and was quickly reflected from there to fall some distance away. This made the boy understand that arrow had the *Ism-e-A'tham* on it. He then told the monk the whole story.

The monk advised him to keep this name with him with all the necessary precautions.

Abdullah made this *Ism-e-A'tham* the means of propagating the truth. If he found anyone sick, he used to say to him: "If you believe in Allah, the One God and become a believer, I will pray to Allah to restore your health." When that person accepted faith, he used to pray to Allah on that person's behalf. The sick one then was healed of his affliction. Soon the story reached the King of Najran. He called the young man in to his presence and accused him of spreading corruption in the land, and that he had opposed the king and his forefather's religion. "therefore your punishment will be that you shall be put to death."

The young man replied:

"O King, killing me does not lie in your hands."

The King became enraged and ordered that the young man be thrown down from a high mountain peak. Thereupon the government officials took him up the mountain to throw him down from a high peak. However Allah kept him safe and sound. He came back to the king. Now the King ordered that he be taken to be drowned in the sea. But in spite of being cast into the sea, he did not drown and no harm came to him. Then the young man said to him: "If you really want to Kill me, there is only one way of achieving your aim. You will have to attack me with the name of Allah, The One God. Only then will I be able to be killed.

The King took the Name of Allah and attacked him. Thereupon the young man died, but at the same time the King was also destroyed and killed. The townsfolk when they saw this battle between the young man and the king, they all sincerely accepted faith in the One God and become Muslims. They immediately accepted to follow Nabi Esa's ﷺ commandments and the instructions of the Holy Book.

From that moment onwards the people of Najran laid the foundations of Islam on their soil.

The story of the advent of Christianity in Najraan and the story of the pious monk reached the ears of the Thu Nawaas, the Jewish king of Yemen. When he heard it, he was provoked into action. Consequently He proceeded with on army upon Najraan and on arrival there, he made an announcement that no one should continue on the Christian religion. Either they will have to accept Judaism or else be prepared to die. However the Christian religion had settled in their hearts so soundly that they were prepared to sacrifice their lives.

When the Thu Nawaas saw this he was further enraged. He therefore ordered that in the streets and highways, trenches be dag and that fires be lit in them. When the soldiers had done that, he had the inhabitants gathered who refused to accept Judaism—men, women and children and had them cast alive into the fire. In their way 20 thousands souls were martyred.

This is the story which Allåh tells us in *Surah Burooj*.

The Story of Tubba'

The word Tubba' is actually an ethiopian word and of semitic origin. According to some Arabic historians it is an Arabic semitic word and the word means "one who is followed" i.e., a leader. But modern day scholars contend that the word is Abyssinian in origin, meaning conqueror and victor. In this way the Arabic meaning is similar to the hiopian one.

Ibn Ishaq after mentioning the events of the preceding pages, says that Thu Nawaas was a very famous Yemeni King. His real name was Zar'a but after becoming king his name was changed to Yusuf Thu Nawaas. His father's name was Taba'n As'ad and his nick name was Abu Karb. At that time the kings of Yemen were called Tubba'. For this reason the books of history call them the Tabi'ah of Yemen. Abu Karb was that tubbah who first cast aside his previous religion of idol-worship and adopted Judaism. He was also the one who attacked Madinah and captured it but after being advised by two Jewish Alimes from Bani Quraizah he accepted proper Mosaic Judaism and left Madinah. He then went to Makkah and dressed the *Kabah* in a cloth and took both

Jewish scholars with him to Yemen. In Yemen he began propagating Judaism and slowly but surely the whole of Yemen adopted Judaism.

The People of Tubba'

The Holy Qur'ãn has mentioned the people of Tubba in two places viz., *Surah Qauf* and *Surah Dukhan*. In *Surah Dukhan* some mention is made of their material strength and mention is also made that when they made themselves guilty of disobedience, they were finally unable to save themselves from destruction. Quraish was nowhere in comparison with them so how can they through their disobedience save themselves from destruction? In *Surah Qauf* there is only mention of them as being among the disobedient and evildoing peoples.

Qur'ãn says:

> "What are they (Quraish) better then the people of Tubba' and those who were before them.
>
> We destroyed them because they were guilty of sin." (44:37)
>
> Further : "Before them was denied the Hereafter by the people of Nooh ﷺ the companions of Rass, the Thamood.
>
> The Ad, Firown, the Brethren of Loot.
>
> The Companions of the Wood and the people of Tubba
>
> Each of them rejected the Apostles and my warning was duly fulfilled in them." (50:12—14)

According to Ibn Ishaq the Kings of Yemen were known as Tubba'. Similarly the king the Thu Nawaas was nick named

Tubba. He is the one to whom was already referred under the discussion of the Ashaabul Ukdood. In short another name for the Ashaabul-Ukhdood was Qown Tubba.

Warnings and Lessons

1. When a person in his individual life and in his life with the congregation becomes unmindful of the fear of Allah and his worldly possessions and power causes him to become proud and arrogant so that he looks down upon everybody else, then exemplary character and pious aspirations leave his being and he only sees his own selfish aims and personal objectives. At such a time suddenly Allah's sense of honour and envy comes into motion to remove him from his heights so that for him the only result is humiliation and defeat. And he who was guilty of exclaiming: "I am you Lord Most High" will be struck by revenge from the Real Lord. In such a case not the worlds strongest powers can come to his aid and support. Neither will any natural wealth and strength be of any avail. Finally he will have to admit that: "Verily, strong is the group of Your Lord."

2. A human being is made up of special human qualities. Otherwise he would be worse then the animals. It is a requirement of humanity that when a person is favoured with wealth and position, and is condowed with worldly gifts and power, he should never become unmindful or ungrateful towards Allah as the Giver. The late Bahadur Shah Zafar used to say:

   "O Zufar do not look upon him as a man
   No matter how intelligent he may be,
   Who in times of comfort do not remember God

And in Anger do not fear God."

Allah says:

> "O People of A'ad, remember that He made you inheritors after the people of Nooh ﷺ and gave you stature among the nations. Call in remembrance the benefits ye have received from Allah that you may prosper." (7:69)

> Further: "And refrain from evil and mischief on earth." (7:74)

And:

> "And it is we who have placed you with authority on earth and provided you therein with means for the fulfillment of you life. Small are the thanks you give." (7:10)

3. When man has acquired complete faith in Allah and been endowed with the ecstasy of *Imãn*, then not even the strongest force on earth or the worst injustice can turn him away from truth. He will with steadfastness show sacrifices as is clearly seen in the story of the Ashaabul Ukhdood.

4. It is the general law of Allah that he grants similar reward for the same type of actions. However it is not necessary that the oppressor or the Arrogout One should immediately he punished because there is also a law with Allah of granting some respite to evil-doers. But when He begins the revenge, then there is no slape.

The Ashaabul Feel

Abyssinia and Najashie

In this modern age the land of Habsh was known as Abyssinia. Today it is called Ethiopia. The Arabs gave the name Najashie to the kings of Abyssinia. A very famous Najashie was As'hama bin Ab'jar, who lived during the era of our Nabi Muhammad ﷺ He became converted from Christianity to Islam.

The religion and culture of Abyssinia previously had been greatly influenced by the Religion and culture of Egypt. And when Egypt became influenced by Christianity, Abyssinia, also became inclined towards it.

Up to a few years ago the Abyssinian rulers were Christians. They were dictators. The ruler used to say that he had numerous relics in a box, which had been in their possession since the time of the prophethood of Rasulullah ﷺ. He considered these relics so precious that when he fled from his country at the time of the Italian invasion into Abyssinia during the Second World War, he took them with him to London in the Aeroplane.

Abraha-tul Ashram

Abraha belonged to the royal family. The Arabs called him Abraha tul Ashram. His rule started in 525 or 543 (A.D.).

He was a very staunch Christian and very enthusiastic who built many churches. The biggest one he built was in the Capital City of San'aa which the Arabs called *Al-Qalees*, an Arabic word for the Greek word Kaleesa. The architecture of this church is most unique. He expressed the desire that the Arabs who were visiting Makkah for pilgrimage should turn in their worship towards this Church and that it should become the place of pilgrimage. When the Arabs heard of this desire of his they became quite perturbed.

The Ashaabul Feel

History is witness to the fact that all the Arabs, from whatever tribe they may have come, used to honour and respect the *Kabah* from time immemorial. According their various beliefs, they used to come to perform pilgrimage at the *Kabah*. One major reason for this was that all the idols of all the various tribes to the total of three hundred and sixty were kept inside the *Kabah*.

When a certain inhabitant of Hijaz province, temporarily resident in San'aa heard of the aim for which Abraha had built the *Al-Qalees*, he became enraged and one night, on Finding the opportunity he secretly entered the temple and desecrated it by throwing dirt in it. The next day Abraha came to know of it and after investigating it because known to him that the perpetrator of the act was a Hijazi. This infuriated him and he swore that he would not rest until such time that he had destroyed the *Kabah* which was erected by Nabi Ibraheem ﷺ.

He prepared a mighty army, further equipped with elephants for an attack on Makkah. The news of this mighty army spread all over Arabia and all of them were struck of this mighty army spread all over Arabic and all of them were struck with fear and apprehension. An Ameer of Yemen Thu Nasr sent a Messenger to all the various tribes of Arbia, telling them that he was prepared to meet Abraha in combat. They should assist him in this endeavour. He did in fact meet Abraha in battle but was defeated and he, Thu Nasr taken as a prisoner. After a few other interruption he finally reached the valley of Maghmus.

From there he sent an Abyssinian general, Aswad bin Maasood to spy out the land. Aswad reached near Makkah and found a spot where the camels, sheep and goats of the various tribes were grazing in large numbers. He took these animals and joined them with the animals of his army. At that time Abdul Muttalib was head of the tribe of Quraish. The various tribes consulted among themselves as to how to oppose the force of Abraha. In the end they came to the conclusion that they were unable and too weak to oppose him. Hence best would be to leave Makkah and flee towards mountains nearby. But while the Makkans were still in Makkah, suddenly from the side of Abraha Khitaabah al-Hameeny arrived asking who was leader of Quraish.

The people pointed towards Abdul Muttalib bin Hashim.

Khitaaba said:

> "I have been sent by Abraha with the message that we do not mean to harm you. Neither have we come to wage war against you. We have only come have to break down this house the *Kabah*. So if you wish to fight or, defend, that is your affair. But if you are not going to prevent us

from doing what we want, then our king is keen to meet you."

Abdul Muttalib replied:

> "It is not our aim to wage war against your king. Neither do we have the strength. This is Allah's House and it is the remembrance of our Holy Prophet Ibraheem ﷺ. If Allah wishes to protect His House, then surely He is able to do so. And if He does not want to protect it, we have no strength to protect it."

After this conversation Abdul Muttalib reached the army of Abraha and through the intercession of one of his countries managed to be brought into the presence of Abraha. Abdul Muttalib was a man of great dignity and respect. When Abraha saw him he handled him with respect, making him sit by his side.

When they started conversing Abraha was impressed with his fine speech Abdul Muttalib complained that one of Abraha's generals had captured his camels "there, I appeal to you to return these camels to me."

Abraha responded:

> "I have been looking upon you as a very intelligent person but over this request of yours, I am greatly surprised. You know that I have come to break down the *Kabah*, which in your eyes in the most sacred place on earth. But you have not spoken a single word about it, but in fact have mentioned many insignificant words."

Abdul Muttalib replied:

> "O King these camels are my personal property for that reason I have put a request to you on their behalf. The *Kabah* is not mine It is Allah's House and He is its Protector who am I to intencede with anyone on its behalf."

Abraha responded:

> "Now no one can save it from my hands."

Abdul Muttalib replied:

> "That matter now lies between yourself and the Lord of the *Kabah*." At this stage the conversation ended and Abraha ordered his soldiers to return Abdul Muttalib's camels to him.

Ibn Ishraq says that together with Abdul Muttalib at that time were the Chiefs of Bani Bakr Ya'mar bin Naffaasha and Bani Hazeel Khuwalid bin Wathilah. They said to Abraha that should he desist from destroying the *Kabah*, they would offer him one third of the wealth of Tihaamah. However Abraha rejected this very generous offer and remained determined to carry out his aim of destroying the *Kabah*. Thus these people returned from their unsuccessful in their mission.

On his return Abdul Muttalib gathered the tribes of Quraish and others and explained his talks with Abraha to them. He gave them this advice that now they should all seek refuge in the mountains so that they would not see with their own eyes the destruction of the *Kabah*. When the people of Makkah started moving out of Makkah, they went under the leadership of Abdul Muttalib to the *Kabah* and prayed thus:

> "O Allah, we are not sad at the fact that when we are able to protect our own goods, then you will have to protect your *Kabah*. Against your might, neither can the power of the Cross can be victorious and neither can any plans of the People of the Cross. But if you should want it to happen that your House be destroyed, then what is there that we can do? O Lord do as you see fit."

Thereafter Abdul Muttalib and those with him of Quraish empited Makkah and proceeded to the mountains to hide in the passes and ravines to await the destruction. The next morning Abraha directed his army towards Makkah with the elephants in the forefront. Before they could reach Makkah a large swarm of birds appeared above them. Every bird had small pebbles of gravel in their beaks and their claws the birds started throwing those pieces of gravel down upon the soldiers. Where the gravel touched anybody's body it penetrated right through until it found an exit on the other side. The effect was that the flesh immediately started to rot away and decompose. Within a short time the whole my lay on the ground destroyed and vanquished.

Muhammad bin Ishaq ﷺ reports that some soldiers fled from there and returned to Yemen to relate to the people the destruction of Abraha's army. The well-known scholar of *Hadith*, Ibn Abi Haatim ﷺ reports on the authority of Abeed bin Umayr ﷺ: "When Abraha's army proceeded towards Makkah and a strong wind was blowing and from the ocean side a swarm of birds with gravel stones in their beaks and in both claws the birds first made a frightening noise and then began to throw the stones down upon the army. At the same time a strong wind was blowing. This proved to be a great calamity to the soldiers. On whoever the stones fell,

it pierced the body till it came out on the other side. The body immediately began rotting and decomposing. In this way the birds destroyed the whole army.

It is related that when Abraha gave the order to proceed towards Makkah, they proceeded. Near Makkah, of the long line of elephants, the first one named Mahmood which refused to obey the order to move was the elephant on which Abraha was sitting. In spite of their urgings and threats the elephant refused to move but when they directed it towards Yemen it moved speedily in that direction. At such a time the swarm of birds arrived.

It was as if this was the last Divine order towards Abraha that even at that late hour he should understand and desist from his actions. His aim was unholy and evil. The courage shown by him was in fact a challenge towards Allah. But the unfortunate soul paid no attention and he had to suffer the consequences of his bad intentions.

Another report says that among these who fled and managed to reach Yemen was Abraha. He reached Yemen in such a state that the flesh of his body was rotten away and he looked like a piece of meat in a decomposed state.

It seems that just as Allah had caused Fir own to drown in the Red Sea and then produced his body to become a sign of warning to the Egyptians as well as Bani Israel, so He also saved the "body" of Abraha for the people of Abyssinia and Yemen to be a sign to them as to what happens to one who challenges Allah. "Will they not then desist."

The Qur'ān and the Ashaabul Feel

In *Surah Al-Feel* the Qur'ān in its inimitable way tells the story as if it emphasises Allah's great favour upon Sayeduna Muhammad ﷺ.

Allah says:

> "(O Muhammad!) Seest thou not how your Lord dealt with the Companions of the elephant? Did he not make their treacherous plan go astray?
>
> And He sent against them a flight of birds,
>
> Striking them with stones of baked clay.
>
> And then He make them like an empty field
>
> Of stalks and straw (of which the corn) had been eaten up." (105: 1—5)

This incident of the Ashaabul feel took place in the month of Muharram about 40 or 50 days before the birth of Rasulullah ﷺ. Among the Arabs this story is such a famous one that they went ahead and called that year "The Year of the Elephant". After that they began to use it as a criterion and guide line for fixing other historical events. According to the Christian era it was the year 571 C.E., and according to the Roman Calendar it was 886 Sikandary.

The Real Story

It is quite strange that with regard to this story of the destruction of the Ashaabul Feel, many individuals have come forth with rather wide and off the mark interpretations for these happening in order to explain them in a "rational" manner. These people fail to understand that Allah should make use of weak and small birds with small and insignificant gravel stones to destroy a mighty force equipped to the teeth with dangerous weapons. They fail to see the reason why Allah should want to relate such a story. Secondly this incident was so well-known among the Arabs and Arab historians So much so that when the *Surah* was revealed in

Makkah, the polytheists, the Jews and the Christians, in spite of their enmity to Rasulullah ﷺ not one of them raised a word against it stating that it was wrong.

It can also not be stated that because this incident was not only connected to the person of Rasulullah ﷺ but to the whole Arab nation especially to the honour and greatness of Quraish and for the reason no one raise any objection or rejection of the event. This is also not correct because at the time when this *Surah* was revealed there was quite a bit of religions divisions in Arabia and especially in the cities of Najran where the Christians were great opponents of Rasulullah ﷺ. Hence these people could perhaps have forgotten their Arabic origins but they could not disregard their allegiance to Christianity and could not for a moment accept anything that would enhance the honour and respect of Muhammad ﷺ. In fact they and the Jews could not bear to listen to a story which tells of the honour and sanctity of the *Kabah* as the *Qiblah* of the Muslims in opposition to their *Bait-ul-Muqaddas* in Jerusalem. They were in fact looking upon the *Kabah* with resentment and rejection and openly rejected it.

In any case history bears witness that not even one Christian contemporary spoke a word against this incident and when after the *Hijrat* the deputation from Najran came to Madinah for talks with Rasulullah ﷺ, they mentioned various objections against Islam, but not a word was mentioned against this happening. And even if they did, then that history which had kept all the objections of enemies in its breast, which had been raised against Rasulullah ﷺ, Islam and the Qur'ãn, how could it have forgotten this objection?

Note: Maulana Hifzur Rahman Seoharwy had given adequate answers to all the objection by European writers as

well as "enlightened" Muslims. Those who wish to do so may consult the original book by Maulana. Hence we must admit without any prejudice that these events, in the same manner as it is told by Arab historians and oral traditions, in true and correct. Moreover the *Surah al-Feel* was revealed with the facts of the matter only about forty two or forty three years later at a time when many of them who were alive at the time of the happenings were still alive. And not one of them spoke one word of rejection of the facts.

Lessons and Warnings

From a study of the history of religion it becomes known that the punishment meted out to peoples and nations, according to wisdom is of two kinds:

1. For as long as the followers of the prophet were very little in comparison with the enemies and opponents, so that they were unable to beat them in combat, then throughout this era Allah assisted them with the earth and the heavenly bodies and in this way sent various forms of punishment upon the rebelliuns and evil-doing ones. In this way the people of Nooh ﷺ, Aad, Ashaabul Aykah and Firown and their peoples were destroyed in this manner. However this era came to an end with the coming of Nabi Musa ﷺ.
2. When the followers of truth were less than the enemies but were of such a number that they could at least face the enemy, then the *Sunnat* of Allah was such that from Allah's side a command was given that they should proceed in combat agaisnt the enemy and fight them with bravery and courage. Their prophet was then given the promise that help and success would be with them as is said in the Qur'ān: "You will be uppermost if you

are believers." Sometimes victory is brought through the help of the Angels and sometimes it would not be necessary.

3. The destruction of the Army of the Ashabul Feel—even though it happened during the second era as mentioned above, it happened at such a time and under such conditions which is closely related to the first era. That is, it happened at a time when revelation was cut off, during there was no messenger from Allah and no prophet and bringer of a new *Deen*. If there were bringers of a new *Deen*, they were individual persons. In fact at time there was a Christian ruler coming towards the *Kabah* with the aim of destroying it.

The polytheists of Makkah in spite of their *Kufr* and *Shirk*, had great respect for the *Kabah* but still in the fact of such a mighty force with elephants felt themselves too weak to protect the *Kabah*. They decided to flee and hide in the mountains. At such a time there was one out of two ways to word off the threat viz., to destroy them with a natural disaster so that the incident can become a warning and a lesson to others. Hence from Allah's side this form of punishment was sent which is related in *Surah al-Feel*. "And that is the truth."

> "And verily that is not difficult for Allah to accomplish."

4. This incident took place a couple of days before the birth of Rasulullah ﷺ. It was such a time when practically every part of the world was deprived of the worship of Allah. At that time claimants to Allah's true religion were present everywhere but the true teachings had become missing. The true features of *Deen* had

become interpolated and changed so that very little of its origins were left. *Shirk* and *Kufr* were present everywhere. At one place there was idol-worship, at another there was worship of the heavenly bodies and somewhere else there was fire worship. At some place there was the aim of worship, then somewhere else there was the worship of the elements as the main aim of religion. Some places saw the doctrine of trinity where Jesus was worshipped as the Son of God. At another place people called Uzair ﷺ the son of God. The whole world either rejected Allah or worshipped idols, the heavenly bodies or the elements of nature or Animals. At that time apart from Allah's worship all other things were being worshipped.

At such a time Allah's decision was that one should come who was to be the bringer of Guidance and right for all the people of the world to show them the right path and to remove them from the worship of things to the worship of the creator and to join man with his True Master. His coming was to break the chains of ignorance.

He is the fruit of the *Du'a* of Ibraheem ﷺ and the promise of the Maseeh. It has now become necessary that the *Kabah* which is the symbol of the worship of Allah in His Oneness and which was originally errected by Hazrat Ibraheem ﷺ and Ismaeel ﷺ should now be honoured and respected with its due respect. Now the trust which had up to now been entrusted to Bani Israel and wherein they had committed treachery, is being taken out of their hands and is being handed to their cousins, the off-spring of Ismaeel ﷺ. This is being done because these children of Israeel had forgotten the covenant of their elders. "That we shall worship your Lord, and the God of Ibraheem ﷺ, Ishaaq ﷺ. "Today with the birth of Muhammad ﷺ the *Amaanat* was taken from

Bani Israeel and handed to Bani Ismaeel. Soon the time well dawn when this hight of guidance will start its shine from the cave Hira and become the overwhelming light of truth to shine over the whole worldly so that this religion will become the *Millat-e-Ibraheemi* and so that the *Kabah* can become the *Qiblah* of the World.

5. From a study of *Surah Al-Feel* two things become quite clear to us. Firstly a very clear picture is depicted of the honour and respect that is due to the *Kabah.*

Now comes the question as to what secret wisdom are being held within this story from the relating of the tale of the *As-Haabil Feel.* Although it is not always possible for man to fathom the wisdom of Allah's acts, yet in our imperfect understanding two factors become clear:

i) This story of the *Ashaabil Feel* is a wonderful sign for the illustrious birth of Rasulullah ﷺ. This is so because the history of this world has shown us that every time and auspicious event is to take place in this world or when an important revelation is to occur, then some important natural sings in the celestial spheres are shown, which if man sees them takes them as warnings.

ii) By telling this story Allah reminded Quraish of the Great favour upon them that at a time when they themselves were unable to lift a finger to save the honour of the *Kabah* which Abraha had come thither with the evil design of destroying it, Allah Himself showed in sign of His power by destroying his plans and bringing him and his forces to destruction.

It is as if He says to them: Have you not taken note of this grant warning from His side.' All that was not done for

your pleasure, O Quraish, as you were then engrossed in '*Kufr* and *Shirk*' and other evil deeds. That was all done to sustain the honour and respect for the *Kabah* which was erected at the blessed hands of the aged Ibraheem ﷺ in conjuction with the young Ismaeel ﷺ, and regarding which they played:

> "O Our Lord I have made some of my off-spring to dwell in a valley without cultivation by Your Sacred House." (14:37)

Now the call is to Quraish : Please understand the truth of this and ponder over it and discard this opposition you present to the Prophet ﷺ.

The truth of this is also further confirmed by the contents of the next *Surah al-Quraish*, in which Quraish is made aware of Allah's favour upon them that is spite of the continuous warfare among the Arab tribes over simple insignificant matters, there exists a large matter of peace and safety in the Holy precinets of Makkah. Not only that, but because of being a chosen people they are allowed to undertake trade journeys in summer and in winter to Syria and to Yemen without any fear of dangers with none to attack them.

Are they not grateful for this favour? Is it not only right that by way of expressing thanks for these favours, and by way of honouring the *Kabah*, they should answer the truthful call of the Rasulullah ﷺ to them:

> "Let them adore the Lord of this House who provides them with food against hunger and with security against fear." (104:3–4)

6. Abraha was a Christian and as such was not prepared to show honour and respect for the *Kabah*. The very presence of the *Kabah* was a thorn which was

pricking at his heart. He looked upon the *Kabah* as a mere building built out of stones and if in opposition to it a splendid building like his *Al-Qalisa* was constructed built out of special stones and adorned with jewels and precious stones, he will be able to divert honour and respect from the *Kabah* to his church and so covert it into a place to be frequented by all. Having though all that he constructed the *Al-Qalisa* in the Capital City of Yemen—San'aa. Then he used a simple incident as a pretext to prepare for the destruction of the *Kabah*. What happened subsequently has been told in detail.

7. One thing else becomes known from this story and that is that of all the world's people, the Christians are the ones with the greatest enmity towards the *Kabah*. And they will show this enmity in the civilized era as well as the uncivilized era. They will always remain oppose to this symbol of Allah's Oneness. History bears witness to the fact that whenever the Christians found the opportunity they showed this opposition. And although Allah has always made their efforts come to naught, they still continued with their enmity.

8. The *Kabah* is called the *Baitullah*—Allah's House. This does not mean that Allah lives in a House. (God forbid) or that He is in need of a house. The matter is that for the peoples of the various areas of the world, and for His true worshippers He has made the *Kabah* as their *Qiblah* towards which they should pray. And seeing that He is free of any specific direction while man is at all times in need of direction it was necessary that such a direction be establish for mankind to bring about unity and uniformity of their worship.

For this reason this sacred building has been declared to be one of the Special Signs and Symbols of Allah (*Shaa'irullah*) which the Renovator among the Prophets and Messengers, Ibraheem ﷺ and his son Ismaeel were first to erect on earth for the worship of Allah. It is the Most Ancient Reminder of Allah's Oneness. Therefore it is not permissible for any Muslim to honour the *Kabah* because it is an idol or worthy of worship in itself. Whoever has that idea in his mind is not a Muslim but a polytheist. The *Kabah* is in fact being honoured because it is one of the special symbols of Allah and is the centrifugal point of *Tauheed.*

Hazrat Esa عليه السلام

The Qur'ãn and Hazrat Esa عليه السلام

In the same manner that Rasulullah ﷺ is the last of all the Prophets (*Alaihimus Salãm*) so Nabi Esa عليه السلام is the last of the Prophets (*Alaihimus Salãm*) of Israel. Between the time of Nabi Esa عليه السلام and the time of Nabi Muhammad ﷺ, no prophet appeared. This in between period was a time when Revelation was cut off. Nabi Esa عليه السلام is considered the Renovator among the prophets of Israel because after the Divine Law of the Toraat, no more sacred scriptures appeared than the Injeel of Nabi Esa عليه السلام which served as the guidance for Bani Israel. In fact the Injeel is looked upon as the completion of the Toraat.

Moreover Nabi Esa عليه السلام was the greatest one to prophecy about the coming of our Nabi Muhammad ﷺ.

The Qur'ãn has in various places described the history of Nabi Esa عليه السلام in quite a bit of detail and by way of introduction to his life story has touched upon the story of his mother Hazrat Mariam, so that the Qur'ãn's message of reminding of the "days of Allah" be completed. Nabi Esa عليه السلام in the Qur'ãn is sometimes called 'Esa'—Jesus. In some places he is called the *Maseeh* "the *Messiah*" and in some other places is referred to as '*Ibn Mariam*' the "Son of Mariam."

Imran and Hannah

In the story on Hazrat Zakariya ﷺ and Hazrat Yahya ﷺ it was already mentioned that among Bani Israel there was a very pious man Imran because who of his piety and righteousness was made responsible for leading the prayers. His wife, Hannah, was also known for her extreme piety. This Imran had no children while his wife had a great desire for children. It is said that Hannah once saw a bird feeding its young ones. Seeing this the desire in her for children became so great that she lifted up her hands and prayed earnestly:

> "O Lord grant me also children like this that they may become the light of my eyes and the happiness of my heart."

The *Du'a* which emanated from her heart was accepted and a few days later Hannah discovered that she was pregnant. The Qur'ãn tells story:

> "Behold a woman of Imran said: O My Lord, I do dedicate unto you what is in my womb For your special service. So accept this of me. For you hear and Know all things.
>
> When she was delivered, she said: "O My Lord! I am delivered of a female child and Allah knows best what she brought forth. And no wise is the male like a female. I have named her Marry and I commend her and her offspring for your protection from the Evil One, the Rejected." (3:35—36)

When this Mariam reached the age of discernment it was decided by an unanimous verdict that she be given into

the care of Hazrat Zakarya ﷺ who placed her in a special chamber near the place of worship for special worship by day. At night she used to retire to the home of her aunt Elisha where she spent the night.

The Piety of Hazrat Mariam

Hazrat Mariam used to busy herself with the worship of Allah night and day and when her time came for service to the Holy Temple she served well indeed. Soon she became known for her piety and abstinence from worldly pursuits, so much so that Allah through the Angels announced:

> "(O Prophet), call to mind the time when the Angels declared: O Mariam Allah has chosen you and purified you and have chosen you above all the women of all nations.
>
> O Mariam, worship your Lord devoutly, prostrate yourself and bow down in prayer with those who bow down." (3:42—43)

In the above verses, with regard to the virtues of Hazrat Mariam various points have come to the fore for example: Can a woman become a prophet? Was Hazrat Mariam a *Nabi*? If she was not a *Nabi*, then what is the meaning of these verses expanding her virtues?

Maulana Hifzur Rahman in discussing these questions in detail came to the following conclusions:

(a) A woman cannot become a *Nabi*.

(b) To call Hazrat Mariam a *Nabi* would be correct by the general meaning of the word.

(c) Thus the meaning of the verses expanding his virtues becomes clear viz., that she has a rank above all the

women of the world. Her rank above other women who are not Nabies is because she is a *Nabi*. And her position above these who are not *Nabies* (e.g., Hawwa, Sara, Hajira etc.), is because of the Qur'ãnic texts which expound her high position and rank. (***Note***: those who wish to see the details of this discussion may refer to the original book by Maulana Hifzur Rahman Seoharwy.)

Hazrat Maseeh

Among the high profile messengers whose advent was expected by the Jews according to the prophecies in their scriptures, the Masseh was one. Hazrat Yahya ﷺ had already informed them that neither was he the Prophet Eliya ﷺ, nor was himself 'that prophet' for whom they were waiting. And neither was he the Promised Messiah. In fact he was the caller towards the mission of the Messiah and bringing the good news of his coming. The Qur'ãn also calls Hazrat Yahya ﷺ and Hazrat Zakariya ﷺ as the bringer of the good news of the Messiah as appears in *Surah Al-Baqarah* (2:39). The Qur'ãn tells the story of the birth of Hazrat Esa ﷺ in these terms:

> "(Remember that time) when the Angels said: O Mariam, Allah gives you glad tidings of a word from Him, his name shall be Esa the son of Mariam, held in honour in this world and the Hereafter And of the company of those nearest to Allah.
>
> He shall speak to men in childhood and in maturity
>
> And he shall be (of the Company) of the righteous.

She said: "O My Lord, how shall I have a son when no man has touched me"?

He said: "Even so: Allah creates what he wills

And when he has decreed a plan be only says to it:-

"Be and it is!"

And Allah will teach him the Book and wisdom

The Law and the gospel." (3:45-47)

"[And O Muhammad ﷺ] Remember Mariam in the Book when she with drew from her family to a place in the East.

She placed a screen to screen himself from them.

Then we sent to her our Angel and he appeared before her

As a man in all aspects.

She said: "I seek refuge from you to Allah, Most Gracious (come not near) if you do fear Allah."

He said: "Nay, I am only a messenger from thy Lord Allah

To announce to you the gift of a holy son."

She said: "How shall I have a son seeing that no man has touched me

And I am not unchaste

He said: "So (it will be).

your Lord says: "That is easy for Me and we wish to appoint him.

As a sign unto men and a mercy from us.

It is a matter so decreed." (21:16—19)

The Angel Jibrael reported the good news to her and blew into her breast and in this manner the word of Allah reached her. The Qur'ãn tells the details in *Surah Ambiyaa, Surah Mariam* and *Surah Tahreem*:

"And Maryam the daughter of Imran who guarded her chastity

And we breathed into (her body) of our spirit.

And she testified to the truth of her Lord And his Revelations

And was one of the devout servants."

"And remember her who guarded her chastity.

We breathed into her of Our Spirit

And we made her and her son a sign for all peoples." (21:91)

Further:

"So she conceived him and she retired with him to a remote place.

And the pains of birth drove her to the trunk of a palm tree

She cried (in anguish):

"Ah would that I have died before this.

Would that I had been a thing forgotten and out of sight."

But a voice cried out to her from heneath the palm tree:

"Grieve not for your Lord has provided a rivulet beneath you.

And shake towards yourself the lrunk of the palm tree:

It will let full fresh ripe dates upon you."

So eat and drink and cool your eyes

And if you see any man, Say:

"I have vowed a fast to Allah, Most Gracious.

And this day will I not enter into talk with any human being."

At length she brought the babe to her people,

Carrying him in her arms.

They said: "O Mariam, truly an amazing thing have you brought.

O sister of Harun, your father was not a man of evil

And neither was your mother a woman unchaste (where from is this?)

But she pointed to the babe

They said: "How can we talk to one who is a child in the cradle?"

He said: "I am indeed a servant of Allah

He has given me revelation and made me a prophet."

And He has made me blessed wherever I be

And has enjoined upon me Prayer and charity as long as I live.

He has made me kind to my mother

And not overbearing and miserable."

So peace is on me the day I was born, the day that I die

I shall be raised up to life (again) (19:22—33)

Note: It is said that Haroon ﷺ was a very pious and righteous man in the family of the Hazrat Mariam in previous years. He was very famous. *(Ibn Katheer)*

When the people heard such words of wisdom from the tongue of a suckling young babe, they were astonished and they realised that Mariam was cleared of all suspicious of immoral behaviour. They realized that her son was a 'sign' from Allah.

This news was not such a thing that could remain a secret. The strange happenings of his birth caused wonderment near and after. All places people were astonished at the events of Esa (*Alaihis Salãm*)'s birth. From the very beginning people took up various position regarding the holy personality of Esa ﷺ. The pious ones looked upon his coming as a sign of the coming of good fortune while those inclined towards evil looked upon it as a sign of bad luck and ill-fortune. And in this manner they became filled with hatred and jealousy. In such an opposing atmosphere Allah took charge of the bringing up of the young child and his protection, so that one day at his hands the dead hearts of Bani Israel could be granted new life, and so that their tree of spiritual development could bear fruit once again.

"And we made the son of Mariam and his mother
as a sign,
And we gave them both shatter on higher ground
Affording Rest and Security
And furnished with springs." (23:50)

The Qur'ãn only mentions this one incident from the childhood of Esa ﷺ. Apart from that the rest of his

childhood which has no bearing upon remind others and guiding them has been left aside.

Description of Esa ﷺ

According to the *Hadith* on the *Mi'raaj* of Rasulullah ﷺ he was reported to have said: "I met Esa ﷺ and I found him to be of moderate height, being reddish, white in colour. His body appeared so clean as if he had just stepped out of the bathroom after a shower. According to another report it is mentioned that his locks of hair used to hang onto his shoulders. Still other reports mention that his colour was that of wheat.

His Advent as a Messenger of Allah

The complete picture of the Jews and their beliefs and their practical lives is told in the Toraat. However the results of their actions is told in the Qur'ãn in the following words:

> "And we gave Musa ﷺ the Book and followed him up
>
> With a succession of Messengers. And we gave the son of Mariam clear sings and strengthened him with the holy spirit.
>
> Is it that whenever there comes to you an Apostle with what you yourselves desire not, you are puffed up with pride.
>
> Some you called imposters and others you slay!"
>
> They say: "Our hearts are the wrappings which (preserve gods word: We need no more)
>
> Nay Allah's curse is on them for their blasphemy little is it that they believe." (2:87—88)

Allah says:

> "And O Esa, behold I did restrain the children of Israel from violence to you. When you did show them clear sings And the unbelievers among them said:
>
> "This is nothing but evident magic." (5:112)
>
> ('And I have come to you) to attest the Law which was before me.
>
> And to make lawful to you part of what was before forbidden to you
>
> I have come to you with a clear sign from your Lord.
>
> So fear Allah and obey me.
>
> It is Allah who is my Lord and your Lord.
>
> Then worship Him. This is way that is straight."
>
> When Esa found unbelief on their part, he said:
>
> "Who will be my helpers to the work of Allah?
>
> Said the disciples: "We are Allah's helpers
>
> We believe in Allah and do you bear witness that we are Muslims." (3:50—52)

Allah also says:

> "The in their wake (Nooh ﷺ and Ibraheem ﷺ) we followed them up with others of our Messengers, we sent after them Esa ﷺ the son of Mariam and bestowed on him the Injeel. And we ordained in the hearts of those who followed him Compassion and mercy.

Also:

> "Remember the day) when Allah will say:

> O Esa, son of Mariam, recount My favour of you and your mother
>
> Behold, I strengthened you with the Holy Spirit
>
> So that you spoke to the people in childhood and maturity
>
> Behold I taught you the Book and wisdom, the Torah and the Injeel." (5:110)

And:

> "And remember Esa ﷺ, the son of Mariam said:
>
> "O Children of Israel I am the Messenger of Allah sent to you confirming the law which came before me and giving glad tidings of a messenger to come after me above name shall be Ahmad........" (61:6)

The Clear Signs (Miracles)

It has already been discussed that in accepting the truth and reality man's nature has always been of two kinds: Firstly there has been this that the claimant to truth should prove the truth of his claims by bringing forth solid arguments and proofs to substantiated his claims.

Secondly there has been the system where together with such arguments and proofs, there should be from Allah's side assistance for the truth by such happenings which are against the natural laws of nature and before which man is completely helpless and unable to emulate.

This second way creates within the reason and thoughts of man such a reaction that he is forced to admit that this happening taking place at the hands of the claiment to truth

i.e. the prophet or messenger, is not his own action but is actually the act of the Power of Allah. This is actually a further proof of the truth brought by the Messenger as the Qur'ān states:

> "When you threw (a handful of sand) it was not your act but Allah's." (8:17)

In this verse this fact is mentioned. But of the two ways mentioned above the more effective one is the former in the eyes of those who have a high place in knowledge and rational thought and they are more inclined to accept the truth of the prophet coming with such proofs and arguments and accept his call towards *Imãn*. On the other hand the people with power and high positions and those under their influence of the general public are more impressed with the second way in which works of miracles are involved. They look upon such acts as being out of this world and a sign from God.

In short, in the Book of Allah and its sentences these *A'ayaat*' (signs) are mentioned so many times that hardly a *Surah* is found where in some way or other it is not mentioned.

Similarly the term '*Aayaat Bayyinaat*'—clear signs or verses has been mentioned very after concerning the Books of Allah (the Qur'ãn, Taurait, Zaboor and Injeel) but some places it also refers to miracles.'

The Reality of a Miracle

The purpose of the mission of a prophet and a messenger is to bring guidance to the world and to teach mankind the path of religion. The Prophet by means of Revelation received from Allah delivers this task and shows the path towards truth by bringing forth arguments and proofs. He does not make the claim that nature and control of the

Celestial spheres are under his control but, in fact, repeatedly announces that he is a mere bringer of glad tidings and warnings from Allah's side, coming to call mankind towards Allah. He says clearly: "I am a human being and an ambassador of Allah. Nothing more." Thus it seems only natural that his claim towards the truth should be examined and so also his knowledge, his upbringing and his personality. But it is quite illogical that demands should be made of him to produce miracles, unnatural occurrences and to make extravagant insterally impossible demands of him. It will be almost like demanding from a skilled physician to prove his skill in the medical field that he should with a magicians knock produce a smart book case or a wooden toy. This seems foolish because the physician never made the claim that he is a smart iron-smith or a black smith. His claim is only to provide healing for the sick for their bodily ills. Similarly the prophets of Allah do not make the claims that they have the power to control and manage the world. They only claim that they are the doctors of the spiritual illnesses of man.

However it has been the *Sunnat* of Allah that when for the guidance of any person or for the well-fare of all humanity a prophet has been sent, such a prophet has always been endowed with solid arguments and proofs and miracles. On the one side with the aid of Revelation from Allah comes forth with commands and prohibitions regarding the life on earth and pertaining to the life hereafter, producing a beautiful system of laws. On the other hand he also comes forth with some Divine Signs, to show the people to prove his coming from Allah side according to the needs of the hour and expedience. Moreover every prophet has been given these special signs (miracles) which according to the era in which he lives. According to the intellectual progress of the time and the special features of that nation and the country these miracles are shown in such a manner that the people of the

time are unable to imitate or emulate. If at such a time obstinacy and prejudice do not interfere, then because of being acquainted with their own arts and specialities, these people would beforced to admit that whatever they see happening in front of them of miracles is not of the handiwork of man, and could only by forthcoming from Allah.

For example, during the era of Nabi Ibraheem ﷺ there was a lot of interest in Astronomy and Chemistry. Then also the people used to associate the movement of the heavenly bodies with their own conditions and used to consider the heavenly bodies as having an influence on their lives. Hence they even went so far as to worship those bodies instead of worshipping Allah. The biggest of these heavenly bodies was the sun because it produced both light and heat, both of which were looked upon as being of the utmost importance for the continues life of the world and its existence. Hence they considered the fire to be the manifestation of the sun and worshipped fire. Moreover they were also quite aware of the special qualities of things and their effects and were also quite aware of the chemical composition of various elements of nature.

For the reason Allah sent Nabi Ibraheem ﷺ for the guidance of his people and to call them to the worship of God and gave him such clear arguments and proofs with which to prove the wrong of their beliefs and to call them away firm the adoration of external features and to remove the custom of ignorance from their beliefs.

Qur'ãn states:

> "That two the reasoning about us which we gave to Ibraheem ﷺ (to use) against his people. We raise when we will degree after degree. For your Lord is full of wisdom and knowledge." (6:83)

On the other hand when the star-worshipping king and the people were beaten by Ibraheem (*Alaihis Salãm*)'s arguments and proofs, decided to cast him into flaming fire the Creator, whose service Ibraheem ﷺ had rendered just said to the fire:

> "O Fire, be cool and means of safety for Abraheem...." (21:69)

In this manner Allah showed His power by bringing about this miracle which caused a tremendous upheaval in the court of the polytheists, which made the whole crowd unable to respond to it, causing them to remain beaten, defeated and humiliated.

> "Then they sought a stratagem against him but we made them to ones who lost most." (21-70)

Another example is this that in the era of Nabi Musa ﷺ the art of magic was a very important art which had an important position in Egyptian society. The Egyptians were skilled Magicians and well versed in this art. For this reason Nabi Musa ﷺ was granted the Toraat and with it also the 'shining hand' and 'the staff which turned into a snake." When Nabi Musa ﷺ in combat with the Egyptian magicians exhibited the miracles which Allah had granted him, the magician on seeing these 'signs from Allah' exclaimed "This is not magic or sorcery. This is something apart from sorcery. This is something beyond the ability of man."

This was something which the true God has exhibited for the support of his true Messenger at the hands of that messenger. Those sorcerers were fully aware of the reality of magic. They then fearlessly declared in front of Firown that from that day onwards they believed in the God of Musa ﷺ and Haroon ﷺ.

"So the magicians were thrown down to prostration

They said: We believe in the Lord of Haroon and Musa." (20:70)

"Fir'own said to the chiefs around him: This is indeed a sorceor well-versed: (26:34)

"When Musa ﷺ came to them with our clear signs, they said: "This is nothing but sorcery, faked up, never did we hear the like among our fathers of old." (28:36)

Hazrat Esa ﷺ and his Miracles

Similarly in the time of Nabi Esa ﷺ there was great interest and emphasis on medical science and on physics. People were greatly influenced by the Greek expertise in these sciences and for many decades the doctors and philosophers of Greece were exhibiting their expertise in these fields, impressing all towns and lands. But at the same time the people were far removed from the belief in the oneness of god and the correct teaching of the true religion. And so also was Bani Israel gone astray from the true path of faith although they were the people who prided themselves as being of the same off-spring as the prophets of old.

And so when according to Allah's *Sunnah* Nabi Esa ﷺ who chosen to be sent to mankind for their guidance, on the one side he was granted the Injeel (Bible) as his proof and argument and on the other side according to the needs of the time he was also granted a few miracles which were to have such an effect and influence upon the experts of that era that they on seeing these miracles being performed would be forced to admit that such an art could not be learnt or acquired but was from Allah for the support and strengthening of the Messenger of Allah.

Of the miracles Esa ﷺ performed there are four which the Qur'ãn clearly mentions:

(a) Through the command of Allah he revived the dead back to life

(b) Through the command of Allah he gave eye-sight to the blind and healed lepers from leprosy.

(c) He used to make the form of a bird from clay and blew into it to bring it to life through Allah's command.

(d) He used to tell people what they had eaten and what they had spent and what they had stored up in their houses.

Among all peoples there exists such healers, at whose hands and through whose efforts people who have reached the end of their hope for cure from some diseases a cure for their ills. And so also there was no shortage of such men of philosophy and physics who were experts on the relationship between body and soul. But when Nabi Esa ﷺ without any such means started to exhibit these miracles without any means it had a different effect upon various peoples according to their faith and lack of faith. Those who were searches after truth, admitted that those acts were outside the powers of the ordinary man but were in fact a gift to the Nabi from Allah in order to support him and as a proof of him being an emissary from Allah. Those, in whose hearts were arrogance, hatred and jealousy, their prejudice allowed them to exclaim that:

"This is but open sorcery." (37:15)

The *Mufassireen* of the Qur'ãn explain to us regarding the four miracles mentioned above that when the opponents of Nabi Esa ﷺ rejected him and his call towards guidance and declared his miracles to be sorcery, then by way of

mocking him they used to say: "If you are really the Messenger of Allah, then tell us what we have eaten today and what have we left behind." Thereupon Esa ﷺ answered them seriously telling them what they ate and what was kept in their homes.

The manner in which the Qur'ãn mentions this last miraculous deed and if one ponders over it one comes to know that there is another more deeper meaning in it. That is that Nabi Esa ﷺ spent much time and effort in advising his people to shun worldly possessions and live an ascetic life-style without love for this world. These who accepted his message used to follow this advice while others on the other side used to pretend to do so and hypocritically used to gather and store worldly goods. By means of this miracle he was able to uncover this hypocrisy on their part.

Apart from these four miracles, the fact that Nabi Esa ﷺ himself was born without a father was in itself a great sign and miracles from Allah as has already been explained. However whatever miracles took place at his hands and his immaculate birth was rejected and denied by the Jews out of jealousy. But even today some scientifically minded persons in Islam also deny these things. Some of them do so not of their own accord but after having come under the influence of European athersto and so that they may not be accused of being religiously influenced and prejudiced. Similarly as far as the giving of life to the dead they contend that before *Qiyamat* Allah will not give life to any dead ones. However the truth of giving life to the dead is no new thing because there were many occasions in the texts where Allah indeed gave life to the dead. (See 2:73, 259 and 260) In all these verses there is a clear mention of giving life to the dead on various occasions. And so also there are those who deny. Esa ﷺ being born without a father and they have spent much

energy to deny this in their writings. However in spite of the various views on this issue if one looks at all the textual evidences in the Qur'ãn in an impartial way one comes to the conclusion that apart from the over zealous attitudes and excesses of the Christians and the attitude of deficiency of the Jews, the Qur'ãn wants to stress the story of the immaculate birth of Jesus. The Jews and the Christians chose two apposite viewpoints on this issue.

On the one side the Jews considered him a fraud and a liar and the fabricator of a lie while the Christians went to the other extreme and called him a God and the son of God, the 3rd person in the trinity. In this regard the Qur'ãn wants to show that the best way is the middle one and to put forth the correct belief in Esa ﷺ.

That is that Esa (Jesus) is not a false prophet, nor a liar and a fraud but is Allah's true prophet and messenger, calling people to the path of true guidance. Whatever he has shown of wonder works were not deeds of sorcery but miracles which Allah had worked. His birth was without a father but that does not necessarily make him a God. How can that person be a God who is in need of being born and for his birth is in need of a mother or a father and of all the needs of human beings. Such a person can never be God.'

In the Qur'ãn an effort is made to disprove and condemn the false beliefs the Jews and Christians hold regarding Jesus. If it had been so that Jesus had been born of a father the Qur'ãn would have stressed it from the very beginning as this is the main reason for him being considered a Divine personality. It would have been logical and expected that this belief should have been rejected from the beginning and a statement would have been made that so-and-so is the father of Jesus. This would have stopped the spread of the idea of

Divinity of Jesus in its tracks. In stead the Qur'ān goes on to state that even his virgin birth and birth without a father is no proof of any Divinity because:

> "Verily the similitude of Jesus before Allah is as that of Adam ﷺ. He created him from dust, then said to him: "Be and he was." (3:59)

Therefore if being born without a father qualifies him for divinity, then Adam who is born without father and mother, is more qualified for divinity."

Any those persons who have given other wrong interpretations and meanings of certain verses separately in order to reject the idea of Jesus being born without a father, they are all wrong because if all those verses are taken together then no other truth comes out of them except that Jesus was born without a father.

And as far as the rational reasoning and logic of this question is concerned, reason too does not consider it impossible to be born without a father. In fact in this modern age instances have come to the fore where birth takes place in ways apart from the generally accepted manner. And those ways of birth cannot be said to be against the laws of nature because up to now we have not acquired the full knowledge of all the laws of nature. The more man progresses in the field of knowledge, so more and more new aspects of the laws of nature become known to him.

Hence very often the very thing which was considered impossible yesterday has suddenly become quite possible today.

Now let us listen to those miraculous deeds and find out what was Allah's aim in granting Esa ﷺ these 'signs'.

Allay says:

"And Allah will teach him the Book and wisdom, the law and the Injeel. And appoint him a messenger to the children of Israel (with the message) "I have come to you with a sign from your Lord in that I make for you out of clay, as it were, the figure of a bid and breath into it and it becomes a bird by Allah's leave.

And I heal those born blind and the lepers and I revive the dead by Allah's permission and I declare to you what you eat and what you store in your houses. Surely therein is a sign for you if you did believe.

"I have come to you to attest the Torah which was before me,

And to make lawful to you part of what was (before) forbidden to you;

I have come to you with a sing from your Lord.

So fear Allah and obey me.

It is Allah who is my Lord and your Lord.

Then worship Him. This is the way that is straight. (3:48—50)

(O Esa bin Mariam) Remember my favour of you) when you make out of clay (as it were) the figure of a bird,

By My leave, you breathe into it and it becomes a bird by My leave, And you heal those born blind and the lepers by My leave.

And behold you bring forth the dead by My leave." (5:110)

"But when he (Esa ﷺ) came to them with clear sings they said: "This is evident sorcery." (61:6)

Whenever the Apostle of Allah exhibited Allah's signs before their peoples, the rejectors always exclaimed that this was "clear sorcery or magic."

Esa ﷺ and His Teachings

Nabi Esa ﷺ at all during his mission endeavoured to call Bani Israel towards the path of truth and the true religion. This was done by putting before them various arguments aided also by miracles.

He taught them faith in the Oneness of Allah, to belief in the Messengers of Allah, to believe in the life of the Hereafter, and in the Angels of Allah, and in the predestination of good and evil by Allah, as well as in the Holy Books of the Messengers of Allah. Further he also called them towards good character and good manners and to avoid all bad characteristics, to be inclined towards the worship of Allah. He also advocated becoming involved with worldly pursuits and to detest the worldly things and to have love for the creation of Allah. These were the things toward which he called and made the object of his preaching.

His efforts were to teach Bani Israel the Torah, the Injeel and with good advices called towards these things. However, the Jews, through their hereditary crookedness as a result of centuries of disobedience and their rebellion against the commandments of Allah had become so courageous in their disobedience and their killing of various prophets had made their hearts become so hard, that except for a very small group of true ones, the majority of them had become so opposed to him that jealousy and hatred

had become their special characteristic. The result was that these who accepted the truth were mostly the poor and weak ones. These were looked down upon by the affluent and arrogant ones:

Allah says:

"When Esa ﷺ came with clear signs he said: "Now have I come to you with wisdom and in order to make clear to you some of the (points) on which you dispute, therefore fear Allah and obey me."

For Allah, He is my Lord and your Lord, so worship Him this is the straight way."

But sects from among themselves fell into disagreement

Then woe to the wrong doers the penalty of a generous day." (43:63—65)

Also: "And remember Esa ﷺ the son of Mariam said:

"O Children of Israel I am a Messenger of Allah to you, confirming the Torah which came before me and giving glad tidings of an Apostle to come after me, whose name shall be Ahmad. But when he came to them with clear signs, they said: "This is evident sorcery." (61:6)

And : "When Esa ﷺ found unbelief on their part he said: "Who will be my helpers to the work of Allah? "Said the disciples: "We are Allah's helpers: We believe in Allah And do bear witness. We are Muslims."

"Our Lord we believe in what you have revealed.

> And we follow the Messenger, then write us down
> Among those who bear witness." (3:52—53)

The Disciples of Nabi Esa ﷺ

In spite of the actions of his opponents and their nonseasonal talks Nabi Esa ﷺ continued to propagate the message of truth, spending night and day in calling them to the *Deen* with his solid arguments and clear signs. Through the Grace of Allah a few such sincere souls came forth who not only accepted faith in Allah but were greatly blessed with his companionship and were prepared to sacrifice their everything in for the spread of the truth, offering their very lives and their possessions in this effort. They used to spend most of their time in his holy company and became known as his disciples (companions) and the *Ansaarullah*, "the helpers of Allah."

They made the person of Esa ﷺ their exemplary model and in the most serious and dangerous situations never left his side.

The Qur'ãn states:

> "And behold, I inspired the disciples to have faith in me and My Messenger, they said: "We have faith and (O Allah) bear witness that we bow to Allah as Muslims." (5:114)

Further:

> "O you who believe, be helpers of Allah as Esa ﷺ the son of Mariam said to the disciples: "Who will be my helpers (to the work) of Allah
> Said the disciples: "We are Allah's helpers!"

Then a portion of the children of Israel believed and a portion disbelieved

But we gave power to those who believed against their enemies

And they became the ones who prevailed."

(61:14)

It has already been mentioned that these disciples were from the poor and labourer community. This is so because has become Allah's *Sunnat* that those who answer the call of the prophets are generally from these poor people. These are the ones showing the spirit of sacrifice. Generally it is the ones with high positions who because of their arrogance and pride become the opponents of the prophets and become the stumbling stones in the way of success and progress. But when Allah's law of Retribution comes into operation, it is those wealth and poor ones who are successful while the arrogant ones are either destroyed or defeated.

Compartision Regarding Disciples

The Qur'ãn describes the virtues of the disciples. We have the contents of the verses of *Surah Al-Imran* in front of us. When Hazrat Esa ﷺ called for helpers on the path of Allah, they were the first group to answer to his call saying: "We are the helpers of Allah: When in *Surah Saff* Allah called the believers to become helpers of Allah, the Qur'ãn gave these pious ones as an example of helpers of Allah, and with their example encouraged others to follow suit. In *Surah Maida* such a picture was given of their acceptance of truth and faith and their submission to the message of truth which porrays their sincerity, and search after truth. All that tells of the ear which portrays their sincerity, and search after truth. All that tells of the era when Esa ﷺ was

present among them but after his being 'lifted up' to the heavens, they delivered such great service that the Qur'ãn states:

> "That we supported those with Imran against their enemies and they prevailed." (61:14)

Shah Abdul Aziz in his *Tafseer* on this verse gave the following verdict:

"After Nabi Esa ﷺ, his disciples made great efforts and then their *Deen* was spread. These disciples who are praised so grandly in the Bible, the Bible also depicts them all as having been cowards in that at the time of need they all left the side of Esa ﷺ when their support was of a great need at a time when he was surrounded by his enemies.

The Qur'ãn on the other hand points a different picture. In *Surah Al-Imran* it states that at the time of danger, when Esa ﷺ called upon his disciples towards helping the *Deen* they all answered with bravery and courage: "We are the helpers of Allah!" Then they exhibited their bravery with sincerity and faith and showed that help. And in *Surah Saff* it says that whatever they had promised Esa ﷺ was said in his presence and they carried out that promise with complete sincerity one faithfulness, proving themselves to be true believers. That is why Allah helped them and made them victorious over enemies.

Looking at this comparison between the Qur'ãn and the Bible any honest judge will come to the conclusion that the truth lies with the Qur'ãn and it seems that scholars of the Bible had brought about changes in its texts.

It seems clear that such incidents have been included in the story so that the story of the crucifixion could seem to be true when he was supposed to have exclaimed on the cross.

"My God, My God, why has thou forsaken me?" Apparently at that time no one stood by him. In any case thee events as given in the Bible are fabricated and is of no truth and consequence.

The Descent of the Table from Heaven

The Holy Qur'ãn tells the story of the descent of the table from heaven in its inimitable way:

> "Behold the disciples said: O Esa ﷺ son of Mariam can your Lord send down to us a table set (with viands) from heaven.
>
> He, Esa ﷺ, said: "Fear Allah if you have faith."
>
> They said: "We only wish to eat thereof and satisfy our hearts
>
> And to know that you have told the truth and that we ourselves
>
> May be witnesses to the miracle."

Said Esa ﷺ, the son of Mariam:

> "O Allah, our Lord send us from heaven a table set (with viands) that there may be for us, for the first and the last of us, a solemn festival and a sign from you, And provide for us sustenance for you are the best sustainer."
>
> Allah said: "I will send it down unto you.
>
> But if any of you after that resists faith, I will punish him with a penalty such as I have not afflicted on any one among all the peoples."

Now did this table descend from heaven? or not? The Qur'ãn does not give any detail and neither is there any confirmation in any authentic *Hadith*. However in the sayings of the *Sahabah* and *Tabi'een* we find some details.

Mujahid and Hasan al-Basri state that table did not descend. They state that the condition on which the table was to descend was such that the Questions realized that man is a weak beings with many weaknesses. It should not be such that because of a simple mistake or untoward act they should be punished with such a painful punishment. Hence they withdrew their request.

Moreover if the table had descended the Christians would have rejoiced in tremendous fashion and the event would have become so well-known all over. This is also the reason why in Christian literature there is no mention of the event at all.

Hazrat Abdullah bin Abbaas ﷺ and Ammaar bin Yaasir ﷺ are of the opinion that the table did descend. The majority of scholars hold this opinion. However with regard to the descend of this table there are various contrasting views. On this *Mas'ala* Shah Abdul Qadir agrees with Mujahid and Hasan al-Basari and in this connection he mentions other interesting point:

In this regard Hazrat Ammar bin Yaasri ﷺ said something of great warning:

> "The people of Esa ﷺ asked him to let Allah sent down a table from the heavens and Allah replied that He accepts their request on condition that they would not commit deceit thereafter and not keep it a hidden secret and that they would not make it a means of gathering treasures. Otherwise it will be ended and they would be punished with a painful punishment as has not been given to anyone else before them."

O You Arabs! think about your own condition! You used to hold onto the tails of your camels and goats as you herded them in the deserts. Then Allah out of His Mercy sent amongst you His chosen Messenger whose character and family you knew quite well. He gave you these glad tidings that very soon you will conquer foreign nations and lands and be victorious over them He prohibited you most strongly from looking at the shine and splendour of wealth and not to treasure up gold and silver and by Allah he warned you that not many nights and days will pass before you will hoard up treasures of gold and silver through that you will become worthy of Allah's painful punishment."

(Tafseer Ibn Katheer Vol. II Surah Maidah)

Esa (Alaihis Salãm)'s Ascent into the Heavens

Nabi Esa ﷺ never married and never built a house in which to live. He used to travel from town to town, village to village preaching the word of Allah and whenever the night came over him, he used to spend the night without homely comforts. Because his person was a means to people acquiring physical as well as spiritual healing, wherever he went the people gathered around him with great devotion and enthusiasm, prepared to sacrifice for his sake.

The Jews looked upon his extreme popularity with the masses and became filled with jealousy and envy, looking upon all this as a sign of danger for them. They could not tolerate this in their hearts. At that time the Jews according to the prophecies of their scriptures were expecting two

Messiahs—one, the Messiah bringing guidance and two' a messiah of falsehood.

It is most unfortunate that when the 'messiah of Guidance' appeared, they looked upon him as the 'Messiah of falsehood'. Their leaders and learned scholars, the pharisees and the sadducees started to make evil plans against the holy person of Esa ﷺ. They decided that for them to be successful, there was no other way out then to have him crucified at the hands of the King of the time.

For the last couple of centuries the Government of Judea was supposed to be in the hands of the herodus, but actually only about a quarter of the century fell under him. The actual rule over the land was in the hands of the Roman emperor who was a clear polytheist and on his behalf the governor of Judea was pilatus.

The Jews were resentful of this polytheist governor whose governorship they considered as a curse upon them. Yet the Jealousy burning in their hearts against Nabi Esa ﷺ, toppled with their inferiority complex join out of being for centuries practically slaves have made them blind to truth that without considering the consequences of their deeds they proceeded to the door of Pilatus to solicit his aid in their fight of Jealousy against Nabi Esa ﷺ, giving the complaint:

> "Sir, this man is not only a danger to us but also to the government. If an effort is not made against him now, neither will our *Deen* be safe, nor will your government remain safe in your hands. For this man has shown such feats which made the people incline towards him. He is all the time involved with these things that he is trying with the might of the people to defeat

you and make himself king of Bani Israel." Not only has he mislead the people in their worldly affairs, but he has even set about changing our religion and is busy making our people irreligious. It is very necessary that this corruption should be stopped so that this evil be stopped at its early stages."

After quite a bit of conversation pilatus gave them permission to arrest Esa ﷺ and to bring him before the governor like a common criminal. When the leaders of Bani Israel acquired this permission, they were very pleased. They congratulated each other that their plot was finally successful. They then decided to await the right moment for his arrest so that among the common people a minimum of unrest would result.

(New Testament John, Chapter II v 47 + 51. St. Mark, Vol. 1–2, Chapter 13)

When Nabi Esa ﷺ perceived the disbelief, rejection and enmity of the Jews, he called his disciples together and told them: "The enmity of the leaders and priests of Bani Israel is not hidden to you. The seriousness of the situation and the great trial ahead of us demands that I should ask you this question: Who of you are prepared in the face of this unbelief and rejection to be prepared to stand up bravely and with courage and be helpers of Allah?" On hearing this question from Nabi Esa ﷺ, all of them answered with great enthusiasm and true *Imãn*: "We are helpers of Allah and worship Him. Be witness that we are Muslims and faithful." They then made *Du'a* to Allah: "O Lord, We have brought faith in your Revealed Book and are true followers of your messenger. Write down our names as being among those devoted to truth."

With regard to the opposition of the Jews towards the missionary activities of Nabi Esa ﷺ there seems no difference in the stories told by the Qur'ãn and the Bible, but regarding what happened after that, there are two completely different stories with regard to the events. There is such a difference in the stories that it seems there is no way of reconciling the two versions. However both the Jews and Christians more or less agree with what happened. The main difference is that the Jews took pride in what they were supposed to have done, while the Christian look upon the actions of the Jews as a clear sign of the cause of God being upon them.

The Jewish and Christian versions state that the leaders of the Jews came to know that Nabi Esa ﷺ and his disciple were hidden in a certain house and they saw it to be a golden opportunity not to be missed. They surrounded the place and arrested Esa ﷺ. From there in a very humiliating way they took him to the court of Pilatus that he may have him crucified. Pilatus did not consider Esa ﷺ to be guilty of a crime and wanted to set him free. However at the insistence of the Jews he handed him over to the Roman soldiers, who put a crown of thorns on his head, spit on him and striking him on his body and after various insults and humiliations hang him on a cross like a common criminal. Then they struck nails through both his hands on the cross and lastly struck him with a small spear on his breast which opened up the breast. Thereafter he passed away on the cross exclaiming: "My God, My God why has thou forsaken me?"

Practically the same story is told in all the other three books of the New Testament Bible. After reading this supposed version one is struck by the fact that according to this version, Esa's ﷺ death took place with him in a helpless and friendless situation and in a very painful manner. It is

true that many of Allah's holy and pious persons had to face these kinds of trials but it seems as if this very story is a clear indication of it being a fabricated story and a forgery. The story shows that Nabi Esa ﷺ did not face the events like a resolute prophet or a righteous person with courage, but died with a voice complaining about God having forsaken him: "My God My God why hast thou forsaken me?" This is some kind of complaint at a time of helplessness which is not expected of the prophets. Moreover, according to the same Injeel Nabi Esa ﷺ is supposed to have on three occasions prayed to Allah,: 'O My father, if at all possible word off from me this cup of 'death."

And when this request was not granted he, in disappointed said: "If there is no other way out for me but to drink the cup of death, then let thy will come to pass."

What is surprising is this that if in accordance with the belief in the doctrine atonement, it has already been decided by God and His Son, then what is the meaning of this request above? And if those utterances of his was as a result of his human weakness and natural qualities, then still after having come to know the verdict of Allah why should he complain of being forsaken as he gave up the ghost and died? Fact of the matter is this that the Christians accepted the fabricated story as told by the Jews, who in arrogance and were exceedingly happy at the events. They used to say that if he was the real Messiah, Allah would not have delivered him into their hands that he had to complain to God up to his death. He was waiting for God to save him but God did nothing to do so. The Jews used to say: "Our forefathers at the time used to challenge that if he was really the son of God and the Promised Messiah why did God not save him from humiliation and insults and from our hands?"

The facts are that when the Christians could not find and answer to these taunts and there remained no solid ground for the belief in the doctrine of atonement, they added another fabricated chapter to the story. In the Book of St. John we read:

"But when he came to Esa ﷺ he saw that he had died and he did not break his bones. But one of the soldiers with a small spear pieced his ribs and immediately blood and water flowed out of the wound. Thereafter, Joseph of Armelita, a disciple of Jesus in fear of the Jews went to Pilatus secretly, seeking permission to take hold of the corpse of Jesus. Pilatus gave permission and he came along and took the body of Jesus. Nicodemus who had gone to Jesus the night before also came along with also five seen of mixed Mur. He took the body of Jesus and dressed the body in fragrant smelling things with cloth. As is the Jewish custom at the time of burial.

Near where they crucified him was a garden wherein there was a grave wherein up to then none had been buried. He placed the body of Jesus in this spot awaiting the Jewish day of preparation. On the Saturday Mary Maqdalene came to the grave at a time when it was still dark. She found the stone which covered the grave had been moved away and ran towards Simon Peter and the other disciples whom Jesus used to love and told them that Jesus had been taken from his grave and that she did now know where he has been placed.

However Mary was standing outside the grave, crying and when she bent down to look inside the grave, she saw two angels dressed in white one sitting at the head side and the other sitting at the foot end where the body of Jesus had been laid down. They said to her: 'O Woman, why do you cry?

She replied: "I cry because My God has been taken away and I do not know where he has been taken."

Saying this, she moved back and sae Jesus standing and failed to recognise him. Jesus said to her: "Mary!"

She turned around and in the Hebrw tongue replied: "*Rabboni.*" (O Master).

Jesus told her: "Do not touch me," for I have not yet ascender to my father. Go to my brothers and tell them: I assumed unto my father and your father, my God and your God.

Mary Magdalene went to the disciples and gave them the message: 'I have seen God and He told me these things."

Then on that day, the first of the week, at evening time when the door leading to where the disciples were, was closed, for fear of the Jews, Jesus came and stood in their midst and said: "May you all be safe."

Saying this he showed them his hands and his ribs and when the disciples saw this they were pleased. He again said to them:

> "May you be safe."
>
> "Just as the father sent me, so I send you."
>
> Saying this he blew at them and said to them: "Receive the Holy Ghost."
>
> (John Chapter 19, V. 33, 34, 38 till 44 and Chapter 20, V. 1–22)

Every person after only a little thought will realize that this chapter is completely disjointed from the previous story. In fact it becomes exceedingly difficult to understand that these two incidents pertains to the same person. The first story speaks of a person who is helpless, disappointed and complains of having been forsaken, whereas the person in the last story is one who is endowed with godly qualities, is one near to Allah and is completely at ease with whatever be falls him and

is in fact hopeful of what happens, considering it and important part of his mission and duty.

In any case the truth is something else and it was a long time after this that the Christian invented the doctrine of announcement and in that respect they fabricated this forged story. For this reason the Qur'ãn set about to remove the curtain of ignorance and darkness from this story and to enlighten on the right path:

The Qur'ãn states that at the time when Bani Israel made plans and plotted against Esa ﷺ in their secret plots at that same time Allah predestined that no power on earth, no matter how strong and mighty, will be able to harm Esa ﷺ or have a victory over him and Allah had resolved that His protection will preserve him against all plots. The result was that when Bani Israel surrounded him, they failed to do him any harm. He was lifted up from this earth into the heavens and when Bani Israel entered the house, the situation became confused and dubious to them and greatly disappointed they failed in their attempt to arrest him. In the manner Allah fulfilled his promise which He gave Esa ﷺ and his mother about saving them. The details of the above is this: When Nabi Esa ﷺ realized that the rejection and disbelief of Bani Israel had reached such a stage that they were prepared to resort to violence to acquire their aims against him, he gathered his disciples in a certain house, and told them of the situation. He then told them: "The time for the major trial has come. This is the time of the test the effort to extinguishes the truth is at its height. Now I shall not remain among you much longer. Hence from now onwards it shall be your duty to remain steadfast on, the true religion, and to propagate and spread it will be your duty after me. Now tell me: Who will be Allah's true helpers?"

The disciples replied:

> "We all will be Allah's faithful helpers. With our hearts we have believed in Allah and you are our witness to the truth of our faith."

After saying this, they prayed to Allah:

> "O Allah, whatever we have uttered grant us steadfastness to remain on it. And write us down as being among those who help your *Deen*."

After this Nabi Esa ﷺ waited to see what direction the activities of his enemies would take and what Allah's decision was going to be in reply.

Allah in the Qur'ãn related that when the Jews plotted against Esa ﷺ in secret, He also plotted against them that their plot would not be successful. And clearly in such a case against His secret plot none can be successful.

Qur'ãn states:

> "And the unbelievers plotted and planned and Allah too planned. And the best of planners is Allah." (3:54)

According to the Arabic language, the word '*Mak'r*' (plotted) is used and it means to 'plan secretly'. According to laws of eloquence, when a person in defence also secretly plans, then no matter how good his action is in terms of ethics and religion, it is also called '*Maka'r*'— 'plotted with an aim to deceive' In most languages we have this saying: "the retaliation of evil is evil,' even though every just-minded person will realize that the retaliation for evil is not really evil but can be good if done in defence. Here in the above verse the word '*Maka'r*' has been used for both the actions

of the enemies of Esa ﷺ as well as for the retaliation by Allah. This is a sign of the eloquence of the Qur'ān.

The fact is that there was a secret plotting to deceive on both sides. On the one side was the plan of the Almighty Allah and on the other side was the plan of the enemies who aimed to deceive.

Finally it came to the moment where the leaders of Bani Israel and the priest surrounded the house wherein Esa ﷺ was. The question arises is to what is the way under such circumstances whereby the enemies could be failed in their attempts towards Esa ﷺ so that no harm comes to him and so that Allah's promise of saving him from their designs could be fulfilled. At such a time Esa ﷺ was informed by revelation: 'O Esa ﷺ, do not fear, your time will be fulfilled. I shall lift you up to the heavens to Me. And I will keep you safe from all enemies. And your followers will at all times be victorious against their enemies. And in the end the return shall be to Me and I will judge between them as to those things wherein they differed."

The Qur'ān says:

> "(And remember that time) when Allah said: "O Esa, I will take you and raise you to Myself and clear you (of the falsehood) of those who blaspheme. I will make those who follow you superior to those who reject faith. To the day of Resurrection. Then shall you all return to Me and I will judge between you of the matters wherein you dispute." (3:55)

Further:

> (On the day of *Qiyaamat* Allah will enumerate to Esa ﷺ all his favours and say to him): "And

> remember that time when I restrained Bani Israel from (violence to) you, when you showed them the clear signs And the unbelievers among them said: "This is nothing but evident magic." (5:113)

So now that Esa ﷺ had been set at ease that in spite of the surrounding of his house the enemy will not be kill him and than an unseen hand was going to raise him up to the heavens, and that he would be saved from his enemies, another question arises as to how that was accomplished. After all the Jews and Christians maintain that Esa ﷺ was crucified on the cross and that he was beaten. In reply the Qur'ãn clearly states that the story of his death on the cross is out and out untrue.

What happened was that when the Messiah was lifted up alive upto the heavens and the enemies entered the house, the situation was made confusing and dubious to them. They could not understand where Esa ﷺ had gone.

Qur'ãn states:

> "(And the Jews were cursed) because they said: "We killed Christ Jesus, the son of Marry.
>
> But they killed him not, nor crucified him,
>
> But so it was made to appear to them.
>
> And those who differ therein are full of doubts with no certain knowledge.
>
> But only conjecture to follow,
>
> For of a surely, they killed him not.
>
> Nay Allah raised him up unto Himself and Allah is exalted in power, wise. (3:157—158)

The above is the verdict which the Holy Qur'ãn gives regarding the Hazrat Esa ﷺ and Sayyeda Mariam in contrast to the fabricated story which the Jews and Christians give. Now that both versions are in front of the reader, he has the scales of justice in his hands. First take the person of Esa ﷺ and his mission on call to guidance and thereafter once again look at the person of Jesus as a resolute messenger of Allah, one near to Allah and according to the belief of Christians, the son of God, being dejected, helpless with out any supporters, complaining about God having forsaken him. Look at the two contrasting characters and bear in mind that the belief in the doctrine of Atonement is based mostly on the fact the Messiah came to this world as the Son of God, so that he could be crucified on the cross as a ransom for the sins of the world. But then also best in mind that at the time when the moment arrived for his death to occur it seems as if he had forgotten that fact and at the last moment he cried out: "My God, My God why have you forsaken me?" This means that at that time he uttered his dissatisfaction at being thus killed. Does a person not have the right to watch these two contrasting pictures and fail to see reconciliation between them?

Thus if any searcher after the truth takes note of all the aspects of these happenings, he will without hesitation come to the conclusion that the story as told by the Bible is one of contradictions and that the Storn as told by the Qur'ãn is the truth based upon truth. History bears witness to the fact that after the Messiah and upto before St. Paul the Christians did not believe in the fabricated story as told by the Jews, but when St. Paul placed the foundations of New Christianity upon the doctrines of Trinity and Atonement, they for the strength and stability of these doctrines, they accepted the fabricated version of these events from the Jews and made it part of their religion.

The Few Tafseer Points

A point that needs to be answered is the question: What is the meaning of the phrase in *Surah* 4:157, — "They killed him not, "but so it was made to appear to them." In other words what was the "doubt" and ambiquity" in which they had fallen. The Qur'ãn gives the answer in this ولكن شبه لهم verse and the verse in *Al-Imran* and that is that He lifted arm up to the heavens.

In *Surah Al-Imran* it is given in a promise of what He was going to do and "that He was going to raise Him up to Him". And *Surah Nisa* it is said in a way of having fulfilled a promise saying:

> "They killed him not and did not crucify him.
> Nay, but Allah raised him up unto Him." (4:157)

The story goes thus: When the enemies encircled the house to arrest him and went inside, they did not find him inside. Seeing this they were greatly perplexed and surprised and could not understand what had transpired and in this manner they were filled with "doubt and embiguity."

Thereafter the Qur'ãn says that those who differ regarding this matter are "in doubt regarding him, with no certainty of knowledge, but only conjecture to follow. For of a certainty they killed him not." (4:157)

Whatever happened after this has already been told. From that story two things become as clear as daylight: (a) that the Jews were so much in doubt that apart from their conjectures, they had no certain knowledge of what happened, and (b) secondly they did kill somebody and spread the word that they had killed the Messiah.

After the clear announcements of the Qur'ãn pertaining to the protection and safety of Hazrat Esa ﷺ and which has been described above the further details of the above two points are further explained in detail by various sayings of the Sahabah and other historical reports. In this regard only such reports are being mentioned which do not contradict the basic facts as mentioned by the Qur'ãn. After all some parts of the Qur'ãn serves as a *Tafseer* for other parts. That Qur'ãn states that the enemies will not even be able to touch him to do him harm and that he was lifted up alive to the heavens and his coming back to this world will be a sign of the coming of *Qiyamat* and that he will return to the world to complete his given task.

According to the reports from the sahabah Nabi Esa ﷺ and the disciples were in a house on the evening preceding the *Sabbath* in Jerusalem. As a result of the instigation by the Jews the Governor of Judea from Damascus sent a group of soldiers to arrest him. They surrounded the house. At that time Allah lifted Nabi Esa ﷺ up from among the disciples up to the heavens. When the soldiers entered the house they found someone who looked like Nabi Esa ﷺ and arrested him and did all those cruel things to him, which were mentioned before this. According to some reports this person was Judas iscarrot. Some mention him as being Georgins and others take him to be Dawood bin Luza. However these reports are not mentioned in the Qur'ãn and neither are they mentioned in authentic *Hadith* and whether they are correct or wrong has no bearing on the basis facts. Readers and researches have the choice of either confining themselves to the non-detail account that Esa ﷺ was saved from all harm and was lifted up to the heavens, and that to the Jews the matter was made to appear as they thought but they actually were

in doubt and had no certain knowledge. They can either accept these facts because they are proved by the Qur'ãn or they may accept those unsubstantrated reports with this understanding that the true meaning of the verses on the subject do not depend upon these details for their true interpretation, but these reports only support these verses.

According to *Surah Al-Imran* and *Surah Al-Nisa* it has been established that regarding Nabi Esa ﷺ the Divine decision was that he should be ascended up to the heavens alive and thus be saved from his enemies. But not only that. The Qur'ãn also at various occasions has thrown light through various conclusive texts on his life and has indicated what wisdom lies in his long life and what wisdom is in his being lifted up to the heavens. So that the hearts of the people of *Imãn* be made pleased.

Belief in Esa ﷺ before His Death

Qur'ãn states:

> "There is none of the people of the Book, but must believe in him before his death and on the Day of Judgement he will be a witness against them." (4:159)

Before this verse the statement was made that they did not kill him, neither did they crucify him, but Allah lifted him up to Himself. This was a rejection of the beliefs of the Jews and the Christians which they had out of their own imagination fixed. They are being told that the claim of killing Nabi Esa ﷺ and the claim to having crucified him are claims which lead to the curse of Allah because false claims and the curse of Allah are two twins following each other. Now in this verse attention is drawn to the fact that if today you boast about this accursed belief, then soon that time will

come along when Nabi Esa عليه السلام, infulfilment of Allah's wisdom on the issue will return to this world and at that time on seeing him every Jew and Christian (*Ahlil Kitaab*) will have no other option but to believe in him. And when on completion of his life-span, he will be taken away from this world he will be a witness against his own people (the Jews and Christians) in the same manner as other Messengers will be witnesses against their peoples.

This is not hidden from anyone that although both the Jews and the Christians are agreed on the story of the crucifixion, yet their beliefs are completely different and based on different bases. The Jews consider Esa عليه السلام as a liar, a fraud and an anti-Christ (Dajjal) and thus boast that they killed him on the cross. The Christians on the other hand hold the belief that the first man on earth—Adam was a sinner and all the people on earth are sinners. For this reason Gods attribute of Mercy chose to become a son and sent this son into the world so that in this world he shall be crucified on the cross and be killed so that he can become the atonements for the sins of all in the past and the future and so be the means for them towards salvation.

In the verse in *Surah Al-Nisa* the Qur'ãn clearly states that the claim towards the killing of the Messiah, no matter on what belief it is based, it is a cause for the curse of Allah, and a cause for humiliation and loss. To consider that Allah's true Messenger is a liar and a fraud is also a cause for Allah's curse. Furthermore, to look upon Allah's servant and the person born as the son of Mariam as the Son of Allah and the hold the false belief of the doctrine of atonement and to belief in the Messiah being crucified and killed is also falsehood and means having gone astray. And in this regard the correct verdict which is based upon the truth is that which

the Qur'ãn has given and which is based upon knowledge and revelation.

The Life of Esa ﷺ

The Qur'ãn has in eloquently concise manner given the account of ascent of Esa ﷺ to the heavens, his present state of life and his descent at a later stage which will be one of the signs of *Qiyamat*. The details of these things have been given in authentic *Hadith*. In this regard Imam Bukhari and Imam Muslim have reported from various sources that Abu Hurairah ﷺ reports that Rasulullah ﷺ said:

> "I swear by Him in whose Hand my life lies, that time will surely come when Esa ﷺ, the son of Mariam, will descend upon you as a ruler and just one. He will break the cross, kill the swine, (in other words destroy present Christianity) and will lift up the *Jizya* and there will be such abundance of wealth that you will not find anyone to accept it and one prostration to Allah will be worth more then this world and what lies in it." Then Abu Hurairah ﷺ said: And if you want confirmation of the Qur'ãn, then read:
>
> And there is none of the people of the Book, but must believe in him before his death. And on the Day of Judgement he will be a witness against them." (4:159) *Bukhari: Kitabul Ambiya*

According to Bukhari and Muslim on the authority of Naafi the slave of Abu Qata'da, Abu Hurairay ﷺ reports that Rasulullah ﷺ said:

> "How will be your condition on that day when the son of Mariam will descend upon you. He

will descend upon you when a person from among you will be your Imam." (*Kitabul Ambiya*)

These and numerous other *Ahadith* are found pertaining to the life and return of Hazrat Esa ﷺ to this world. These *Ahadith* are all *Saheeh* and in *Hadith* terminology are not lower in rank than *Saheeh* or *Hasan* as far as authenticity is concerned and as for these *Ahadith* being well-known (*Mashhoor*), they have been reported by Imam Tirmidhi, Hafiz Iaduddeen bin Katheer, Hafiz Ibn Hajar Asqalani, and various other eminent scholars of *Hadith*. In fact some *Sahabah* report that Rasulullah ﷺ made these utterances in the presence of numerous *Sahabah* while delivering the *Khutbah* and those *Sahabah* during the era of the four rightly guided *Khalifas* used to recite those *Hadith* in the presence of many others. Among those *Sahabah* whose thousands of students heard these utterances are the following persons of high rank known for their high discipline and strong powers of memory, trustworthiness and great knowledge in which aspects they were considered Imams and leaders: Saeed bin Musayyib ﷺ, Naafi ﷺ, the slave of Qatadah, Hanzala bin Ali al-Aslomi ﷺ, Abdur Rahmaan bin Adam ﷺ, Abu Salmah ﷺ, Abu Oamrah ﷺ, Atan bin Bishaar ﷺ, Abu Suhail ﷺ, Mosul bin Ghaffaara ﷺ, Yahya bin Abi Ammer ﷺ, Jubayr bin Nadeer ﷺ, Urwa bin Masood Thaqafi ﷺ, Abdullah bin Zaid Ansari ﷺ, Abu Zar'a ﷺ, Yakoob bin Aamir Abu Nasrah ﷺ, Abu Tufail ﷺ.

Thereafter among the students of these scholars and scholars of *Hadith* who had heard from them and who were themselves known as the Imams of *Hadith* and the *Ameerul Mumineen* in *Hadith* and became known as such, some of their names are the following: Ibn Shihaab Zuhri ﷺ, Sufyaan

bin Layth ؓ, Ibn Abi Thee'b ؓ, Owza'ee ؓ, Abdur Rahman bin Abu Ammer ؓ, Suhail ؓ, Jabalah bin Suhaim ؓ, Ali bin Zaid ؓ, Abu Raafi ؓ, Abdur Rahman bin Jubayr ؓ, Nu'maan bin Saalim ؓ, Ma'mar ؓ, Abdur Rahman bin Ubaidullah ؓ.

These *Ahadith* bad become so well-known and famous during the times of the *Sahabah* and the *Tabi'een* and had become so accepted in scholarly circles that according to the Imams of *Hadith* the question of the life of Esa ﷺ and his return had reached the stage of being '*Mutawwatir*', so much so that they called these *Aadith* '*Mutawaatir.*' And so these *Ahadith* have been accepted throughout the ages. Hence these authentic *Ahadith* have been reported by such great scholars as Imam Ahmad, Imam Bukhari, Imam Muslim, Imam Abu Dawood, Imam Nisai, Imam Tirmidhi and Imam Abu Majah—the authors of the authentic books of *Hadeeth*. And they all are agreed that the reporters of these *Ahadith* are known for their transworthiness. This is the reason why it is said that on the question of the life and the return of Nabi Esa ﷺ the Muslim *Ummat* has reached a general concensus. Therefore in the well-known Book on Islamic doctrines and beliefs sifarayni there is a clear in direction that this *Ummat* has reached general consensus on this issue: It states:

> "And among the signs of the coming of *Qiyaamat*, the third sign is this that Hazrat Maseeh, Esa bin Mariam ﷺ will descend from the heavens and this descend from the heavens is proven in the Qur'ãn, the *Sunnat* and the general consensus of the *Ummat*. As for as this general consensus is concerned, there is no doubt whatsoever that Hazrat Esa ﷺ will descend from the heavens and

regarding this fact not one of the followers of the *Shariat* are of a different opinion. However only the philosophers and the religions ones have denied it and in Islam their rejection has no influence on the consensus of the *Ummat*."

The Events at the Descent of Esa (AS)

The events that will take place at the time of the descent of Nabi Esa (AS) according to the authentic *Hadith* is given in proper sequence will be thus:

The day of *Qiyaamat* will be on a fixed day but except for Allah no one knows when it will be. It will dawn very suddenly. Says the Qur'ãn:

> "Verily the knowledge of the Hour (of *Qiyamat*) is with Allah (alone). (31:34)

> And: "Until on a sudden the hour is on them." (6:31)

> And further: "All of a Sudden will it come to you." (7:178)

According to the *Hadith-e-Jibrael* Rasulullah (SAW) told Jibrael:

> "Regarding the question as to when *Qiyaamat* will be, the one questioned does not know more then the questioner."

According to another *Hadith* one *Sahabi* reports: "I heard Rasulullah (SAW) say one month before he died: "You question me regarding *Qiyaamat*, but verily that knowledge is only with Allah."

However the Qur'ãn and certain authentic *Hadith* have given some events that will occur shortly before *Qiyaamat* as a sign of its being near at hand. One of those signs is the descent of Nabi Esa ﷺ from the heavens, the details of which is as follows:

> "A fierce battle will be raging between the Muslim and the Christians and the leadership of the Muslims will be in the hands of a man from the off-spring of Rasulullah ﷺ. He will be called the "*Mahdi*". At that time also will appear the messiah of falsehood—Dajjal— (the Anti Christ). This Dajjal will actually be of Jewish off-spring and will be one-eyed. On his forehead there will be the letters *Kaaf*, *Faa* and *Raa*— *Kafir* and the people of *Imãn* will be able to read it with their *Imani* perception. The people of *Imãn* will be safe from the treachery and deception. First he will make the claim to be God, and like a cheating juggler with sleight of hand will show some tricks akin to magic and thereby try to pull people's attention towards him. But seeing himself unsuccessful in that he will claim to be the Messiah of guidance. The Jews in large numbers will follow him. This is so because they already rejected the Messiah when he came and claimed to have killed him. Up to today they are still awaiting the coming of the Messiah. And so one day at the *Jamia Masjid* of Damascus the Muslims will be busy gathering for the performing *Salaah* in the dark and while the *Iqamat* will be recited in preparation for the *Salah* with Imam Mahdi to lead prayers and at that moment a noise will be

> heard to pull the attention towards it. The Muslims will look up towards the noise coming from the sky and will notice a white cloud above. Soon thereafter they will see Nabi Esa عليه السلام descending dressed in two yellow cloths with two angels on his sides. The angels will leave him at the *Minaret* of the *Masjid* and return back to the heavens. From that moment onwards Nabi Esa عليه السلام will again become connected to this world. Then he will become once again subject to man's natural needs and in order to descend down to the courtyard of the Mosque he will look for the stairs to come down. Very soon he will descend and enter the lines of those ready for *Salaah*. The *Imam* of the Muslims (Imam Mahdi) will in his honour step backwards so that Esa عليه السلام may lead the prayers but he will reply: "This *Iqaamat* has been recited for you to lead prayers. So proceed to lead the *Salaah*."

After the *Salaah* the leadership of the Muslims will be taken over by Hazrat Esa عليه السلام He will then proceed in battle against the anti Christ (Dajjal) and will find him at the gate Babul-Hudd, one of the gates of the town. Dajjal will realise that the time for the end of his treachery and deception had come. Like a metal he will begin to melt and Esa عليه السلام will step forward and finish him off. All those Jews who had been following him will then embrace Islam and follow the guidance of the Messiah. Then they will be seen standing with the Muslims shoulder to shoulder. All this will have a definite effect upon the non-Muslims and the polytheists and they too will embrace Islam and so at that time there will be no other *Deen* remained except Islam.

A short while after this Yajooj and Majooj will come out of their hiding place and according to the instructions of Allah Nabi Esa ﷺ will keep the Muslims safe from the evils of these two tribes.

Nabi Esa (*Alaihis Salãm*)'s rule on earth will last for forty years and in this period he will spend a married life and during his time the world will be so filled with peace and justice and there will be such goodness and blessings that the goat and the lion will peacefully drink water from the same shore of a river, and at that time evil and iniquity will be overcome.

Note: According to Imam Muslim his rule will last for sixty years.

The Death of Messiah

After ruling for forty year Hazrat Esa ﷺ will die and will be buried at the side of Rasulullah ﷺ. Hazrat Abu Hurairah ﷺ reports in a long *Hadith*: "Then Esa ﷺ will descend to this earth and rule over it for a period of forty years. Thereafter he will die. The Muslims will recite his funeral prayers and they will bury him." *(Ibn Majah)*

Imam Tirmidhi has quited the following *Hadith* on the authority of Hasan Muhammad bin Yusuf bin Abdullah bin Salaam from Abdullah bin Salaam ﷺ who said:

> "In the Torah the description of Rasulullah ﷺ is given and this is also mentioned that Esa ﷺ will buried at his side."

Nabi Esa ﷺ and the Day of Qiyaamat

In *Surah Maida* various aspects of the life of Nabi Esa ﷺ has been dealt with and at the end of the *Surah* the

Surah is terminated with mention of him once more. At that moment Allah first of all drew the picture of how the various prophets will be questioned about their peoples. Those prophets will reply in great respect that they did not know. They will reply that Allah had fixed this day of Reckowing so that the reality of all affairs be brought to the fore so that judgement be given in connection with all things. They will reply that they are only judges as to the outward appearance of things while Allah alone is aware of the inner secrets. "So what evidence can we give today. All that we can say is that we know nothing. You are the knower of the Seen and the unseen and you know all things."

Qur'ãn says:

> "One day Allah will gather the prophets together and ask: "What was the response you received (from men of your teachings)? They will say: "We have no knowledge. It is you who knows in full all that is hidden."

In the next verse Nabi Esa's ﷺ reply is given and his reply is in accordance with the reply of the other prophets:

> "And behold! Allah will say, O Esa son of Mariam, did you say to men worship me and my mother as gods in derogation of Allah?"
>
> He will say: "Glory to you. Never could I saw what I had no right (to say)
>
> Had I said such a thing, you would indeed have known it.
>
> You know what is in my heart, though I know not what is in yours.
>
> For you know in full all that is hidden.

> Never said I to them except what you commanded me to say:
>
> "Worship Allah, My Lord and Your Lord."
>
> And I was a witness unto them while I dwelt among them.
>
> And when you took me up, you were the Watcher over them
>
> And you are witness to all things.
>
> If you are going to punish them, they are your servants.
>
> And if you forgive them, you are the Exalted in Power, the Wise.' (5:119—121)
>
> When Nabi Esa ﷺ had given his reply Allah will announce:
>
> "This is a day on which the truthful will profit from their truth
>
> Theirs are gardens with rivers flowing beneath—their eternal home.
>
> Allah, well-pleasure with them and they will Allah.
>
> That is the Great Salvation (the fulfilment of all desires) (5:122)

This reply of Nabi Esa ﷺ to Allah's question is what is expected of an eminent prophet of Allah. He will first put forth the excuse as to how he could have said such a thing which is completely in contrast with truth: "Glory be to you, It is not filling that I should say that which is not true." Then he will express his knowledge as being nothing in comparison with Allah's. "If I had said that, you would have know it. For you know what is in me and I know not what is

in Yours. Verily you are the Knower of the Unseen." Then he will explain what was his duty to convey: "I did not tell them except that which you commanded me to say: Worship Allah, My Lord and Your Lord." Now as to how his people responded to his call, he says:

> "And I was a witness over them while I was among them. And when you did take me up, you were the watcher over them. And you are a witness over all things."

And then bearing in mind that among the people there were both true believers as well as rejecters of truth, he expressed the fact that the coming of the punishment and the wish for forgiveness, he says:

> "If you punish them, (you have the right to do so) as they are your servants. And if you forgive them, (you have the night) for reply you are the mighty, the Wise One."

Thereupon Allah passed his Judgement according to his law of justice, so that he who deserves mercy and forgiveness not be filled with disappointment, but he happy and overjoyed and so that those deserving of punishment not be expecting what they do not deserve." (5:119)

The above verse clearly indicates that this is what is to take place at the time of *Qiyaamat*, not at the time of Esa (*Alaihis Salãm*)'s return to the world.

The Divisions of Bani Israel

In previous pages it has been explained that Allah gave to Nabi Esa ﷺ the Injeel. This Revealed Book was actually an appendix and the completion of the Toraat. That means that

although the basis of Nabi Esa (*Alaihis Salãm*)'s teachings were in fact the Toraat, but because of their iniquities and strayings of the Jews, which meant that Allah had to send Nabi Esa ﷺ for rectifying their faults, the Injeel was sent. Although before the advent of Nabi Esa ﷺ, the Jewish beliefs and their practical activities had reached such a state that they were innumerable, Nabi Esa ﷺ took the steps to repair their condition. Among others there were some fundamental faults to which attention had to be given. And in these fields Nabi Esa ﷺ spent much effort:

(a) Among the Jews was a group who believed that the deeds of a person, good or bad is being punished or rewarded in this life. As for the hereafter and the day of *Qiyaamat*, punishment and reward after death, resurrection—all these beliefs are wrong. These were the Saducees.

(b) A second group did believe in all those things of the hereafter but they also believed that for reaching to Allah it was necessary that one should avoid worldly pleasures and the secluded from the people of this world and to live an ascetic life. Hence they preformed to live away from societies in monasteries and huts. However this group had before the advent of Nabi Esa ﷺ lost their position and under the ruse of having cut themselves off from the world were being involved with all worldly and dirty things Outwardly they were still appearing ascetic hermits but in their private lives they were guilty of the most heinous sins, permissiveness and drunkenness. These were the farisees.

(c) The third group had to do with service to the Holy Temple. Their situation was such that the service which

they were supposed to deliver for the pleasure of God and which was to be based upon sincerity, these services were made into a form of business and for as long as they were not paid for any services they refused to deliver. So much so that they ever went so far as to alter the texts of the Toraat. These were the priests.

(d) The fourth group were above all these others. They had gradually succeeded in lefting the general public believe that there were no basic principles of religion except those which they issued. They had the prerogative to declare the permissible things as non-permissible and to declare the non-permissible things as permissible. They could add to the religion and discard from it. They had the right to write for someone a pass to enter paradise and for whomsoever they wished they could write out a certificate for entrance to hell. In other words they were among Bani Israel, "the gods other than God almighty." In the alterations of the Toraat both in words and in meaning they had become very advanced. Through all this they had been seeking to acquire worldly wealth, and for the sake of pleasing the public were prepared to change and alter the injunctions of *Deen*. These were the Ahbaar "Rabbis" and the scholars.

These were the various group of people and their beliefs and these were the people among Nabi Esa عليه السلام had to carry on his mission, and for whom rectification he was sent. He first took careful notice of each ones beliefs and with sympathy and love criticised their actions, encouraging them to bring about changes for the better. He endeavoured to remove from them all evils and to connect them once more to the Creator. However, they refused to make alternations to their evil deeds and not only that, they also started calling

him 'the Maseeh of falsehood', becoming his opponents in the spread of the truth. They also made various plans against him and even were bound to seek to kill him.

The Four Versions of the Injeel

If it the unanimous verdict of all scholars even Christians, that the Injeels which was revealed to Nabi Esa ﷺ, is not any one of the Injeels that we have today. What we have today are translations from the Greek and other languages and these versions have undergone various changes, omissions and additions. Further it is not even established that certainly these Books have been written by the students and disciples of Esa ﷺ. There is a strong possibility that they were compiled much later by other writers. However in these Books and their translations there most certainly are certain sermons and utterances of advice give by Nabi Esa ﷺ. Hence occasionally one gets the impression that in parts they contain his actual words.

(Maulana Hifzur Rahman produced an interesting discussion on the present day Injeel and the conclusion of it is that not the original Injeel. Recently another writer Maurice Bicaille wrote a book: "*The Bible, Science and the Qur'ãn*", in which he gave his scholarly research on the topic. Both these discussion are worth reading and studying).

The Qur'ãn and the Injeel

It is a basic principal of the Qur'ãn that just as Allah is only one, so also His truth is only one. Such truth does not belong to any special nation, people or group. In every nation or country Allah's message of guidance is based on the same basis which has always remained the means of guidance for Allah's true messengers and prophets.

That is what was called, 'The straight path' or 'Islam'. The Qur'ãn came to teach this forgotten lesson and to remind mankind of it, and this is the final message which carried within it the truth of previous religions and to accomplish the task of being a guidance for all mankind on earth. As such, to reject this message now is tantamount to reject all the truth of Allah.

In view of this basic principal the Qur'ãn has praised the eminent position of Hazrat Esa ؑ and has admitted that the Injeel is indeed an inspired Book and that it is revealed from Him, but at the same time also informed that scholars have attered the original teachings and have altered it in various places to change its original texts to include Blospheny and '*Shirk*'. At various places the Qur'ãn also accuses the *Ahlil Kitaab* of acting against the teachings of the Toraat and the Injeel. This shows that even though the original texts of the Toraat had been already altered at the time the Qur'ãn was revealed, those versions of it which was in the world at the time were not fit to be called the Injeel of Esa ؑ. Still the Qur'ãn mentions both these books with respect:

> Says the Qur'ãn: "O Muhammad ﷺ, It is He who sent down to you (step by step) in truth the Book confirming what went before it.
>
> And He sent down the Toraat (of Musa ؑ) and the Injeel (of Jesus) before this as a guide to mankind and He sent down the Criterion (to judge between right and wrong). (3:3—4)

Further:

> "And Allah will teach him the Book and Wisdom, the Toraat and the Injeel." (3:48)

And:

"O People of the Book why do you dispute about Ibraheem when the Toraat and the Injeel were not revealed till after him? Have you no understanding." (3:65)

And:

"And in their footsteps We sent Esa, the son of Mariam, confirming the Toraat which had come before him, And we sent him the Injeel, there in was guidance and light and confirmation of the law that had come before him a guidance and an admonition to those who fear Allah.

"Let the people of the Injeel judge by what Allah had revealed therein If any do fail to judge by (the light of) what Allah had revealed, they are (no better than) these who rebel." (5:49—50)

And:

"And if only they had stood fast by the Toraat and the Injeel. And all the revelations that was sent to them from their Lord, they would have enjoyed happiness and sustenance from above them and from beneath their feet under them;

There is firm among them a party on the right course

By many of them follow a course that is evil." (5:69)

Further:

"Say (O Muhammad ﷺ): O People of the Book, you have no ground to stand upon unless you

> stand fast on the Toraat, the Injeel and all the revelations which had come to you from your Lord." (5:71)

Further:

> ...."And behold, O Esa I taught you the Book and wisdom the Toraah and the Injeel." (5:113)

Qur'ãn also says:

> ("The righteous ones are) Those who follow the Messenger, the unlettered prophet whom they find mentioned in their scriptures in the Toraat and the injeel. (7:157)

Also:

> "Allah had purchased from the believers their persons and their goods for theirs (in return) is the Garden (of paradise).
>
> They fight in His cause and slay and are slain—
>
> A promise binding on Him in truth through the Toraat, the Injeel and the Qur'ãn." (9:11)

All these praises are for that Toraat and Injeel which was fit to be called the Mosaic Toraat and the Injeel of Esa —the real Books of Allah, but what have the Jews and Christians done to these books. The Qur'ãn tells the story in its own words:

Says the Qur'ãn:

> "Can you (O men of Faith) entertain the hope that they will believe in you, seeing that a party of them heard the word of Allah and perverted it knowingly after they understood it?" (2:75)

And:

> "And woe to those who write the Book with their own hands and then say, "This is from God"—to traffic with it for a miserable price!
>
> Woe to them for what their hands do write and for the gain they make thereby." (2:79)
>
> "They (the People of the Book) change the words from their right places." (5:14)

And further for a very meagre price they used the verses of Allah as is explained in *Surah Baqarah*, *Surah al-Imran*, *Surah Nisaa* and *Surah Tobah* in various verses of the Qur'ãn. In other words the Jews and Christians were guilty of various forms of alternations in the texts both word-for-word alteration as well as changes in meaning and interpretations. Very after this was done with the purpose of acquiring worldly gain. There can hardly be a more unfortunate deed than this which earns the curses of Allah.

The Qur'ãn and the Doctrine of Trinity

At the time of Revelation of the Qur'ãn there were three major groups into which the Christians were divided according to their beliefs in the Trinity. One group used to say that Jesus the Messiah was God himself who came down to this world in the form of the Messiah. A second group used to believe that the Messiah, Esa bin Mariam was the Son of God. The third group used to say that the Oneness of God was in the secret of the Trinity which consisted of God, Jesus and Mariam. This group consisted of two divisions. One group of the two took the Holy Ghost instead of Mariam. In any case they both took Jesus to be one of the Trinity.

The Qur'ãn addressed all these groups individually and jointly and with clear arguments explained that in this regard

the correct belief is one and one only viz. That the Messiah was born of the mother Mariam. He was a true Messenger of Allah. Whatever else is said about his divinity the trinity or son ship of God are all false and untrue, irrespective of whether it brings about a lessening of his status as in the case of the Jewish belief that he was a sorrier, magician or a fraud, or whether it brings about an exaggerated status as in the case of the Christians who consider him God or the Son of God or part of the Trinity.

Not only did the Qur'ãn proceed to reject the Christian views regarding Jesus but also explained the correct status of the Messiah. And how near he is to Allah so that the views of the Jews the may be rejected.

Nabi Esa ﷺ is a Chosen One

The Qur'ãn states:

> "Esa ﷺ said: "I am indeed a servant of Allah. He has given me revelation and made me a prophet
>
> And He has made me blessed wheresoever I be and has enjoined on me prayer and charity as long as I live.
>
> He has made me kind to my mother and not overbearing and miserable
>
> So peace is on me the day I was born, the day I day And the day I shall be raised up to life."
>
> (19:30—32)

And:

> "He (Esa ﷺ) was no more than a servant. We granted our favour to him And we made him an

example to the Children of Israel. And if it were Our will, we could make angels from among you succeeding each other on the earth."

(43:59—60)

Further:

And remember Esa ﷺ the Son of Mariam said: "O Children of Isarael! I am the Messenger of Allah sent unto you confirming the Toraat which came before me and giving glad tidings of an Apostle to come after me whose name shall be Ahmad." (61:6)

The Messiah is neither God nor the Son of God

Qur'ãn states:

"In blasphemy indeed are those who say that God is the Messiah, the Son of Mariam. Say: Who then has the least power against God if His will were to destroy Christ, the son of Mariam, his mother and all-everyone that is on earth?

For to Allah belongs the dominion of the heavens and the earth and all that is between. He creates what He pleases. For Allah has power over all things." (5:19)

Further:

"They do blasphem. Who say: "God is Christ the Son of Mariam'.

But Christ said: "O Children of Israel. Worship Allah my Lord and Your Lord."

Whoever joins other Gods with Allah, Allah will forbid him entrance unto the Garden and the

fire will be his abode. There will for the wrong-doers be no one to help." (5:75)

And:

"They say: God has begotten a son. Glory be Him. Nay. To Him belongs all that is in the heavens and on earth. Every thing renders worship unto Him. (2:116)

And:

"The similitude of Esa ﷺ before Allah is as that of Adam ﷺ He created him from dust. Then said to him: Be! And it was. (3:59)

And:

"O People of the Book commit no excesses in your religion

Nor say of God aught but the truth:

Esa ﷺ the Son of Mariam (no more than) an Apostle of Allah And His word, which He bestowed on Mariam and a spirit proceeding from Him. So believe in Allah and His Messengers say not: "Trinity, desist, it will be better for you

For Allah is One God. Glory by to Him.

For is he exalted above having a son. To Him belong all that is in the heavens and the earth. And enough is Allah as *Wakeel.* (4:171)

Further:

"To Him is due the primal original of the heavens and the earth. How can he have a son when he

has no consort. He created all things and He has full knowledge of all things.

And:

"Christ the Son of Mariam was no more than a Messenger Many were the Messengers who passed away before him. His mother was a woman of truth. They had both to eat their (daily) food. See how Allah makes clear His signs to them." (5:78)

And:

"Christ does not disdain to serve and worship Allah

Nor do the Angels, those nearest to Allah.

Those who disdain His worship and are arrogant

He will gather them all together unto Himself to Answer. (4:172)

And:

"The Jews call Uzair the Son of God and the Christians call Esa ﷺ the Son of God. That is a saying from their mouths

In this they but imitate what the unbelievers of old used to say.

Allah's cause be on them: How they are deluded

Away from the truth." (9:30)

And:

"Say (O Muhammad ﷺ) He Allah is One, the One and Only. Allah is Eternal, Absolute

He begets not nor is He begotten.

And there is none like unto Him." (112:1—4)

The Qur'ān has with various arguments for the sake of rectifying peoples beliefs given the true beliefs it expects from man. However it is note worthy that in spite of various alternations to the texts of Toraat and Injeel in their present text, still there is not one place in these texts which gives the basis for the doctrine of Trinity. Hence even in the present text of the scriptures there is no proof for this doctrine. For this reason we can say without any doubt that this doctrine of trinity is the result of the temperament created by idol-worship and having been mixed up the idolatry.

Atonement

The second doctrine of Christianity which has destroyed the type face of the Religion is the doctrine of Atonement. The basis of this belief is this that all human beings, good or bad, even the Messengers of Allah are born in sin and are sinners. Thereafter the Mercy of Allah came to the fore and the desire of Allah was that His son should be sent into the world to be crucified to become the ransom for the sins of all mankind and thus provide the Salvation for man.

However, in order to make this belief a solid base, a few very important requirements are necessary without which this belief will not be acceptable. Hence the Christians first of all adopted the belief of the Jews that Jesus was hung on the cross and killed there. Then they, having given acceptance to that belief, they took the next step that in spite of having ascribed Divinity to Christ, the spread the word that the Messiah was not killed for his own sake but for the salvation

of all humanity. And when that happening took place he again put on the cloak of divinity and in the celestial world resumed the relationship between father and son. Now comes the question: What is the result of a religion where instead of correctness of beliefs the criterion for salvation is made the doctrine of Movement? He has at various places made it quite clear that for the salvation of mankind correctness of beliefs, in other words, correct worship of God and good deeds are the only criteria. Whosoever casts aside these two things has strayed from the right path and has been deprived of the correct religion. Says the Qur'ãn:

> "Verily those who believe (in the Qur'ãn) and those who follow the Jewish (Scriptures) and the Christians and the Sabians, any one who believe in Allah and the last day and work righteousness shall have their reward with their Lord. On them shall be no fear Nor shall they grieve." (2:62)

This means that the object of the Qur'ãn's mission of rectification of conditions is not to create a new group like the Christian, Jews and *Sabians* who will be called the '*Mumineen*' as if this is a new national group, that no matter how wrong its beliefs may be, they will at all times be destined to enter paradise. This is not the aim and object of the Qur'ãn. It in fact makes the announcement that no matter to what group one belongs and as long as he worships Allah in accordance with the instructions of the Qur'ãn and performs righteous deeds, he will attain salvation and be successful. Otherwise even if he was born in the house of a Muslim and in that society came to his death, but lived a live without worship of Allah and without righteous deeds there will be so success for him. In this way the Qur'ãn

destroyed the very basis on which the doctrine of Alonement was laid.

Something worth paying attention to:

There is something that should never be forgotten. That is that the interpreters of previous religions, the *Mufassireen* and the translators of scriptural texts in their acts of altering those texts and interpolating them found much help in interpreting those texts by making use of metaphors, figurative expressions and similes instead of explaining the basic beliefs in clear unambiguous terms. The result of all this was that when the real worshippers and philosphers entered into this originally true religion, and accepted it as their religion for life, they brought their philosophic ideas and their idolatious tendencers with them and made those metaphors, figurate expressions and similes the basis for the understanding of the doctrines and in this way altered the reality of the religion, making it into a strange mixture of truth and polytheistic ideas. This is the reason why the Qur'ãn in explaining the existence of Allah, His Oneness, the Holy Books, the Angels of Allah and the fundamental principles of the *Deen*, has used such words and expressions which are clear and unambiguous, leaving out all metaphors, figurate expressions and similes. This was done so that no irreligious one or polytheistic idolator could not find a means towards spreading his un-Islamic ideas. And should, in spite of that any person should be bold enough to try anything like that the Qur'ãn itself will in clear terms reject such interpretations.

Note: There are many topics concerning Hazrat Esa ﷺ and Hazrat Mariam as regards the birth of Nabi Esa ﷺ, his life, his miracles etc. And in this regard many booklet and articles have been written. Maulana Seoharwy has on all

these topics given quite detailed discussions. However this abridged version of his book could not contain all those details and we have only touched on them in brief. Readers who have the desire to delve into greater detail may return to the original book.

Sayeduna Muhammad ﷺ

Hazrat Muhammad ﷺ and the Holy Qur'ãn

The Holy Qur'ãn is the Revealed word of Allah and the final messenger Hazrat Muhammad ﷺ is the one on whom it was revealed. The Holy Qur'ãn is the light of knowledge and the person of Rasulullah ﷺ is its practical exemplar. The Qur'ãn says: "Verily you have in the Messenger of Allah the perfect exemplar." The Qur'ãn is guidance and Muhammad ﷺ is the guide. The Qur'ãn is a message inviting towards truth and Rasulullah ﷺ is the Inviter and messenger. For this reason every sentence of the Qur'ãn and every verse of it is connected in some way or other to the attributes of Allah and thus it may be said that the Holy Qur'ãn is the *Zikr* of Allah.

Once some *Sahabah* asked Hazrat A'isha (*Radhiyallãhu 'anha*) to mention to them some characteristics of Rasulullah ﷺ and of his life. Hazrat A'isha (*Radhiyallãhu 'anha*) asked in surprise:

"Do you not read the Qur'ãn that you now ask me about his character? Verily his character was the Qur'ãn."

In other words whatever the Qur'ãn commanded, was practically demonstrated by the actions of Rasulullah ﷺ. Hence to bring faith any portion of the Qur'ãn means bringing forth a portion of his blessed life.

However those verses wherein the Qur'ãn made special mention of his noble qualities, the Qur'ãn addressed his as '*Ya ayyuhan Nabiyyu*'. "O Prophet" and '*Ayyuhar Rasul*', "O Messenger", in the those verses the following words of praise and description are mentioned apart from the above two:

(1) Muhammad, (2) Ahmad, (3) Abdullah (servant of Allah), (4) *Shaahid* (witness), (5) *Basheer* (Bringer of good news), (6) *Natheer* (warner), (7) *Mubashshir* (God news bringer), (8) *Muthakkir* (Reminder), (9) *Azeez* (Mighty), (10) *Ra'oof* (Most Kina) (11) *Raheem* (Merciful), (12) *Ameen* (trustworthy), (13) *Muzammil* (One covered up in garments) , (14) *Muddaththir* (One wrapped up in a mantle), (15) *Munthir* (warner), (16) *Haadee* (Guide), (17) *Yaseen* (O Man), (18) *Rahmatahu* (Allah's Mercy), (19) *Nee'natahu* (His bounty), (20) *Tawha* (O Man), (21) *Noor* (the Light), (22) *Haqq* (the truth), (23) *Siraj Muneer* (Shining lamp), (24) *Shaheed* (witness), (25) *Daaee ilal-lah* (Inviter towards Allah), (26) *Khatamun Nabiyeen* (Seal of the Prophets), (27) *Nabi* (Prophet), (28) *Rasul* (Messenger), (29) *Abduhu* (His Servant).

The names of Rasulullah ﷺ which have been given for him in the Qur'ãn and the authentic *Hadith* have been the topic of many books. The famous scholar of *Hadith* Abu Bakr bin Arabi in his commentary on Saheeh Tirmidhi was

mentioned that there are 64 such names. Some other scholars have mentioned ninety-nine and some other scholars have enumerated a thousand such names. (See Fat-hul Bari). According to an authentic *Hadith* mentioned by Imam Bukhari Rasulullah ﷺ is reported to have said: "I have five names: I am Muhammad, I am Ahmad, I am *Maahi* (Remover of *Kufr* and *Shirk*). I am *Haashir* because on the day of *Qiyamat* I shall be the first of Mankind to appear before Allah. I am *'Aaqib* (which according to Imam Zuhri means: I am the last prophet). According to Haafiz Ibn Hajar Asqalani the *Ulama* unanimously agree that the Names of Rasulullah ﷺ that appears in the Qur'ãn are the following:

1. *Al-Shaahid*
2. *Al-Basheer*
3. *Al-Natheer*
4. *Al-Mubeen*
5. *Al-Daa-ee-ilallah*
6. *Al-Sirajul Muneer*
7. *Al-Muthakkir*
8. *Al-Rahmah*
9. *Al-Nee'mah*
10. *Al-Haadee*
11. *Al-Shaheed*
12. *Al-Ameen*
13. *Al-Muzzammil*
14. *Al-Muddath-thir*

Then also according to the *Hadith* the following name are very well-known.

1. *Al-Mutawakkil*

2. *Al-Mukhtaar*
3. *Al-Mustafa*
4. *Al-Shaafe-ul-Mushaffa'*
5. *Al-Saudiqul Masdooq.*

An any case the names, Muhammad and Ahmad are proper nouns while the others are descriptive attribute and nicknames. In the Qur'ãn there is one *Surah* named after his name: Muhammad, wherein his name is mentioned in the verses at the beginning. The name Ahmed is mentioned only one in *Surah Saff*. There the prophecy of Nabi Esa ﷺ gives the good news of his coming as Ahmed: "And giving glad tidings of an Apostle to come after me whose name shall be Ahmad":

This is also something not to be forgotten that his names and attributes were not merely customary, and that his parents were at liberty to gave him any name they wanted and that friends and relatives were at liberty to call him by any nick name they wanted. It is not so but infect the names and attributes were greatly connected with his character and righteous deeds, as we have seen with regard to the name '*Maahi*', '*Haashir*' and '*Aaqib*', as was reported by revelation. Moreover, by way of example, the name Muhammad is given to that person who is always mentioned with praise and goodness. This is what previous prophets prophecies and is an indication of what will happen in future. Similarly Ahmad is the name given to him who is most in praising the Creator. It also indicates complete servitude towards Allah and is from one who is a perfect human being. Undoubtedly he is for all God-worshipping ones a bringer of glad tidings and for all evil-doers and spreaders of corruption he is a grave warner. On the day of *Qiyamat* he will be a witness for or against the acceptors of truth and the rejectors thereof. At

the same time he is a giver of advice and a reminder for those prepared to look at the truth and to listen to it. For those seeking the path of truth he is a guide and an inviter to the path. His very presence in this world is a mercy for all the universe. For ignorance and for '*Shirk*' he is a light and for spreading the message from Allah he is a prophet and messenger. At the times of calamities he is a mighty one and for every facet of man's life, he is a kind-hearted one, merciful. His call is the call of truth and his person is that of a trustworthy truthful one, bringing Allah's final message to mankind. Hence he is the seal of the prophets. His message and mission is for all nations. He is *Tauha* and *Ya'seen*, and for the firmament of prophethood he is a shining lamp, while in the world of apostle-ship he is basheer (bringer of good news) and *Nazeer* (a warner). In the worlds of religions he became known as the one wrapped in a blanket. May Allah's choicest blessings be upon him. His one great attribute is his great reliance on Allah. He is Allah's chosen messenger and in His presence he is the chosen one (*Mustapha*). For the righteous ones he is the Intercessor whose intercession is accepted and in all aspects of life he is the truth-ful one whose truthfulness is confirmed. May Allah's choicest blessings and salutations be upon him. (*A'ameen*)

Propecies Regarding His Advent

Maulana Khawaja Altaf Hussain Haali in his '*Musaddas Mad wo juzar*' Islãm has drawn attention to all the prophecies concerning the advent of Rasulullah ﷺ: He says:

Then came he whose coming was prophecied and fore told. "Regarding this Maulana Hifzur Rahman gave various quotations from the Tourait and the Injeel wherein the coming of Rasulullah ﷺ was foretold. Then from the Holy Qur'ãn he also gave similar contents by way of confirmation. Giving that

in a concise form is very difficult. Hence we shall concentrate only on the last time of the above poem by Maulana Haali in which he calls Rasulullah ﷺ "the answer to the *Du'a* of Ibraheem and the prophecy of the Messiah".

Once Rasulullah ﷺ in reference to this prophecy said:

> "I am the answer of the *Du'a* of my father Ibraheem عليه السلام and I am the answer to the prophecy of the Messiah."

In the Qur'ãn the *Du'a* of Ibraheem عليه السلام to which reference is made is given in this manner:

> "O Our Lord send amongst them a Messenger of their won who shall rehearse your signs to them and instruct them in scripture and in wisdom, and sanctify them (from all evil) For you are the exalted in Might, the wise." (2:129)

As regards the prophecy of the Messiah, Allah says in *Surah Saff*:

> "(And remember), when Esa عليه السلام the son of Mariam said: "O Children of Israel. I am a Messenger of Allah (sent) to you, confirming the Tourait which came before me, and giving glad tidings of an Apostle to come after me whose name shall be Ahmad.

But when he came to then with clear signs, they said: "This is evident sorcery."

As a result of these *Du'a*s and prophecies, the event which followed in answer to that, the person responsible for the abridged version has decided to add in here a quotation from the Life of Rasulullah ﷺ, Vol. I:

The Arrival of Muhammad ﷺ

In the flower bed of time, the season of spring has arrived. Today is that moment for which time has been waiting for many centuries. The wandering bodies of the heavens have for ages been expecting the dawn of this day with great longing. For many years the heavens have been impatiently rolling from side to side for the coming of this day and night in great expectation.

The day of his birth and the morning is the morn for which whole world had been waiting and the historians write about it that: "During this night the fourteen pillars of the court of Kisra fell down, the fire of the Zorastrians of Persia became extinguished, and the waters of the Lake Sawa dried up. But in actual fact it is not the pillars of the court of Kisra that fell down. It is the splendour of Persia that fell down. It is the grandeur of Rome, the dignity of China that ended. It is not the fire of Iran that became extinguished but the very origins of evil, *Kufr* and the fire of falsehood that became extinguished. In the temples of idols, the dust flew about and the abodes of the idols became filled with dust, the holy books of the Majoosees became destroyed. In the face of the coming of *Tauheed* the pages of Christianity became old and lost. In the Garden of happiness springtime had come. The rays of the Sun of guidance started spreading in all directions.

The orphan child of Abdullah, the beloved son of Amina, King of the Haram, the Ruler over the Arabs, the leader of mankind, the king of both worlds have left the world of possibilities to enter the world of reality with honour and respect.

The history of religions is witness to the fact that approximately six centuries after Nabi Esa ﷺ and at such a

time when the whole world had forgotten the original message of the various Prophets (*Alaihimus Salãm*), at a time when the human race had instead of worshipping Allah had become involved with the worship of other beings and creatures and had in fact become involved with the worship of all beings from man till stones, when some men had been called avatars, some as the sons of God, while some other people had become worshippers of matter and others had even gone so far as to worship themselves, he came. It was at a time when the sun was worshipped, the moon and the stars, animals, trees and even stones were taken as gods, when fire, water the air and earth were worshipped. In fact at the time when at some place or at some time or other everything in the Universe was being worshipped—all these things except the One True God. It was a time when there was not any imagination of His Oneness and even where he was worshipped as a God, it was done the worship of other beings and yet they used to say:

> "We only serve them in order that they may bring us nearer to God." (39:3)

This was that dark era during which the Law of Allah of Guidance and falsehood repeated the history of the past and Allah brought into operation his Law of Reaction against prevailing conditions and as such the sun of guidance came into being to destroy the spreading clouds of *Shirk*, ignorance and customs and replaced them with the light of knowledge and faith in the true Allah.

It was on the 9th of *Rabee-ul-Awwal* in the year 571 after Christ when in the city of Makkah, devoid of any culture and greenery and cultivation in the most respected of its families among the tribe of Quraish from the marriage of Abdullah the son of Abdul Muttalib and Amina

the daughter of Wahb the Holy Prophet Muhammad ﷺ was born into this world.

What a happy moment that was!! which came to announce the animating glad tidings of guidance for the whole word. And how grand that how which gave the good news to every piece of the inhabited world when the whole world was singing the song. "Now is the hour when the misfortunes of this world will depart and the world be filled with great fortune and happiness, when the reins of *Kufr* and *Shirk* will be pulled aside and the rays of *Hidayat* (guidance) will shine through, when the worship of natural objects will depart to be replaced with the worship of the One True Allah.

This world, this land and not even this tribe could have known that the person whose advent was being awaited and expected was going to appear at this uncivilized spot of the earth, so much so that no special importance was given by them to his illustrious birth, so that it shall be remembered. However that Creator of this Universe who had decreed that this glorious personality should appear in the world, has also decreed that his birth should be fore shadowed by a famous historical event and miracle, viz., the incident of the *Ashaabil-Feel*—the companions of the elephants.

Reliable and authentic reports indicate that Sayyaduna Muhammad ﷺ was born a few months after the destruction of the *Ashaabil-Feel*.

This event was of such importance for the Arabs and especially for the people of Hijaz that they looked upon it as an astonishingly unbelievable event of wonder and surprise that they could never forget it. For this reason they named that year as the 'Year of the Elephant.' However, they failed to understand that this event was a sign pointing towards that person who was going to come and gather all the peoples from this world at the centrifugal point of

Tauheed and the *Qiblah* of the Ancient father, Ibraheem, and who will come to clear it of all the pollutions of the idols and their worship and reserve it only for the worship of Allah in His Oneness. For this, the *Kabah*, is that first house which was erected solely for the worship of Allah. It was not a temple which was erected for the worship of pictures. It was also not a church or a cathedral for the purpose of making obeysance to the statues of Jesus and the Virgin Marry. And neither is it a temple for a fire which is considered the manifestation of light and where the fire is being worshipped. Nor is it a synagogue of the Jews where Sayeduna Uzair is called the son of God and where hymns in his glory and honour is being sung. No, this *Kabah* has been erected for Allah's worship and His alone as the Qur'ãn states:

> "Verily the first House of worship appointed for men was that at-Bakkah. (3:96)

Hence soon after the advent of Rasulullah ﷺ after the Divine Hand had exhibited the secrets of his birth soon after the events of the year of the Elephant, the whole world was to understand that saving the *Kabah* from the malicious attack of Abraha-tul Ashraam was done for this reason that very near at hand was the time when once again this *Kabah* was to become the central point of the worship of Allah alone and the centrifugal point of *Tauheed*. Hence whatever power was to oppose this idea and stand in its way was going to be destroyed and removed.

Abraha was a Christian while Quraish were idol-worshippers so who can say the destruction of Abraha's army was in fact support for the cause of the idolaters? No definitely not. What in fact happened was that Abraha, in opposition to the wishes of Allah desired that the beautiful

church he had erected in Yemen in honour of the Father, Son and Holy Ghost, should become the gathering place of all peoples. And for this reason, he sent his army to destroy the *Kabah*. On the other side Quraish and the Arabs were powerless to prevent that and unable to defend the *Kabah* against his army. Abraha was in possession of all the best equipment and weapons while Quraish had none. At such a time Allah's sense of care what is sacred and inviolable came into motion and the world saw that when the arrogant one clashes with the wishes of Allah such arrogance is brought to destruction and the *Kabah* as the axis of *Tauheed* remained standing:

> "Verily in this is an instructive warning for whosoever fears (Allah)." (79:26)

The Qur'ãn has told the story of the destruction of the *Ashaabul-Feel* in its own concise and eloquent style:

> "(O Prophet Muhammad ﷺ) don't you see how your Lord dealt with the companions of the Elephant?
>
> Did He not make their treacherous plan go astray?
>
> And sent against them flights of birds,
>
> Striking them with stones of baked clay?
>
> Then He made them like an empty field of stalks and straw, (of which the corn) had been eaten up? (105:1—5)

In any case the year of the Elephant was the year of the birth of Rasulullah ﷺ and this event was the nearest sign pointing towards his birth. And the reality of this is quite clear to him,

"Who has a heart for the acceptance of Truth
And who with wide-awake attention lends out
his bars to listen."

Verdict Regarding His Day of Birth

All the historians agree on three things concerning the birth of Rasulullah ﷺ Firstly, that the year of his birth was the year of the Elephant. However they differ as to which day of Rabb-il-Awwal was the actual day of his birth. Among the general Muslim public it has become well-known that it was the 12th of *Rabee-ul-Awwal*. There are some weak traditions which support this view. However the majority of *Ulama* agree that the correct date is the 8th. But the most reliable and authentic view is that it was the 9th.

The well-known scholars of history as well as most eminent scholars of *Deen* consider this last view to be most correct. This is the view held by Humaidy, Aqeel, Yunus bin Yazeed, Ibn Abdullah, Ibn Hazm, Muhammad bin Moosa, Khwarizmi, Abul Khattaab bin Wahya, Ibn Taimya, Ibn Qayyim, Ibn Katheer, Ibn Hajar Asqalani, Shaikh Badruddin Ayny and others.

Mahmood Pasha, who was a well-known Turkish Astronomer who drew up an astronomical table with the purpose of giving the eclipses of the sun and the moon (from the time of Rasulullah ﷺ) right up to our modern times has proven that nowhere in that time did a Monday, fall on the 12th of Rabee-il-Awwal. Hence in accordance with the reliable and authentic reports as well as proof from astronomical tables we are forced to declare that 9 Rabee-il-Awwal is the day of his birth Now, how long was that after the incident of the Companions of the Elephant? Among the various views and opinions the most famous view is that it took place after fifty days since the *As-*

Haabil-Feel incident.

His Genealogy

Nabi Muhammad ﷺ was of Arabic off-spring and belonged to one of the most honoured Arabic tribes—the tribes of Quraish and was a member of one of the most respected of its branches—Bani Hashim. The Holy Qur'ãn in addressing the Arabs has on various occasions referred to his Arab descent:

> For example: "It is He who sent among the unlettered a Messenger from among themselves, to rehearse to them his verses, to sanctify them and instruct them in scripture and wisdom—although they had been before in manifest error." (62:2)
>
> And also: "And no has come unto you a messenger from amongst yourselves." (9:128)
>
> Further: "Allah did confer a great favour upon the believers when he sent among them a Messenger from among themselves." (3:164)
>
> "And thus have We sent By Inspiration to you, (O Muhammad ﷺ) An Arabic Qur'ãn that you may warn the mother of Cities (Makkah) and all around her and warn them of the Day of Assembly." (42:7)

The scholars of Genealogy are unanimously agreed that Rasulullah ﷺ was from the off-spring of Hazrat Ismail ﷺ the son of Hazrat Ibraheem ﷺ, because Quraish are unanimously accepted as being Adnaanis. And there is also no difference of opinion that Quraish is from the off-spring of Adnaan. The Geneologists have given the line of

geneology like this: Muhammad son of Abdullah, son of Abdul Muttalib, son of Hashim, son of Abdi Manaaf, son of Qusay, son of Kilaab, son of Murrah, son of Kaab, son of Luway, son of Ghaalib, son of Fihr, son of Maalik, son of Nadr, son of Kinaanah, son of Khuzaimah, son of Mudrika, son of Ilyaas, son of Mudar, son of Nizar, son of Ma'ad, the son of Adnaan.

On his mother's side the family tree meets the father's line at the juncture with Kilaab. In other words she is Amina, the daughter of Wahb binti Abdi Manaaf, binti Zuhrah binti Kilaab. The other name for Kilaab is Hakeem.

From Adnaan to Ismaeel ﷺ, there is considerable differences of opinion among geneologists in the names. Hence Rasulullah ﷺ used to say: "The geneologists utter untruths" and he merely said so much about the line of descent: "Allah has chosen Kinaanah from the off-spring of Ismaeel ﷺ. And from Kinaanah He granted honour and respect to Quraish. And among Quraish he chose Bani Hashim, granting them a position of eminence and from Bani Hashim He chose me." (*Sahih Muslim*)

In other words he only confirmed that part of the geneology, which was unanimously agreed upon among the geneologists.

Islãm has declared it a grave sin to boast about one's off-spring and has condemned the habits and social customs built upon genealogical superiority. Islãm states that virtue and rank in Allah's sight is dependent upon one's 'Faith and righteous deeds' and in Allah's sight no importance is attached to one's off-spring or lineage. Furthermore the idea of superiority of off-spring is completely against the Islãmic ideal of Islãmic brotherhood. Hence in the constitution of Islãm no importance is given to superiority of '*Nasab*'.

However it is a fact that the prophets and Messengers were always members of the most respected families. Perhaps this was Allah's verdict because so that contrary to the costumes of nations and peoples of superiority among peoples, people should not get the impression that the prophets invitation towards truth is for the prophet's own sake and benefit or for bringing respect and honour to him and his family.

The Qur'ãn states:

> "O people, O Mankind we have crated you from a single pair of a male and a female (Adam and Howwaa) and made you into nations and tribes, that you may know each other (not that you may despise each other). (49:13)

> "Verily the most honoured of you in the sight of Allah is (he who is) the most righteous of you." (49:13)

At the time of the Farewell sermon when Rasulullah ﷺ was giving his farewell message to thousands of Companions while giving some fundamentals of Islãm, he also gave this revolutionary advice: "Allah has declared O people, We have surely created you from one male and one female and we have made amongst you nations and tribes so that you may know each other. Surely in the sight of Allah the most honoured among you who is most righteous and god-fearing. So take note, there is no superiority for the Arab over the non-Arab or for the non-Arab over the Arab, neither has white one any superiority over the black one and nor has the black one any superiority over the white one, except as far as *Taqwa* is concerned. O people of Quraish let it not be that on the day of *Qiyamat* you come forth with the world on your shoulders while other people come forth with good deeds for the hereafter. Let it be known that merely because of your being

of Quraish, I will be unable to save you from Allah. (with Allah the most important thing is your deeds).

(*Majma-ul-Fawa'id*, Vol. I, from *Ma'jam Tabrani*)

On one occasion speaking against boasting about genealogical off-spring Rasulullah ﷺ called it "prejudice of the days of Ignorance," and strongly advised Muslims to avoid it at all costs.

"Through the call of Islãm Allah has removed from you the prejudices of the days of Ignorance and arrogance of boasting about genealogical ties and now a man is either a righteous believer or an evildoing wicked one. All humans are the sons of Adam عليه السلام and Adam عليه السلام was created out of dust. (*Abu Dawood, Tirmidhi*)

Rasulullah ﷺ declared:

> "Now it is either a god-fearing believer or an unfortunate evil-doer."

He clarified this matter that in the life of a Muslim no such thing should occur from his side which is the opposite of his belief. His coming from any specific tribe was merely to have circles of mutual recognition, family ties and kindness and good relationships and so that these matters may proceed with ease. Man should only be divided into two kinds: Either righteous or evil-doer, no matter from what family, tribe or country he comes originally. If they are worshippers of Allah and acting righteously, they are one brotherhood. And if they are polytheists, unbelievers and wicked people they form one brotherhood.

His Childhood as an Orphan

The name of the father of the last prophet was Abdullah and his mother was Aminah. Even before his birth and while

his mother was still pregnant with him, the father passed away. Historians tell us that Abdullah was travelling with a caravan towards Syria on a commercial journey. On the way back to Makkah when they reached Yathrib, he become ill and stayed behind with the relatives of Bani Najjar. When the Caravan reached Makkah, they brought the news of his sickness to his father Abdul Muttalib, who sent another son Haarith to Yathrib to inquire about his condition. Where Haarith reached Yathrib he discovered that Abdullah, after being sick for a month and a few days, had passed away in Yathrib. This news was brought back to Makkah and caused Abdul Muttalib and the whole family great sorrow because Abdullah was the 'delivering' of all.

This means that before Muhammad ﷺ was born he was already an orphan. In *Surah Duhaa* Allah refers to the miracle of this orphan child without any worldly possessions still with Allah's grave growing up to become finally the guide of this world:

Allah says:

> "Did He (Allah) not find you an orphan and gave you shelter? And did He not find you wandering and gave you guidance? And did He not fina you in need and made you independent? (93:6—8)

Hazrat Abu Qatada ﷺ says that in these concise words and in very eloquent manner the Qur'ãn describes the various stags of the life of Rasulullah ﷺ. You understand that mentions '*Fa-aawaa*' which means that Allah the Creator of this world had organised for him a means of living his life and that He did not leave you without protector and helper. This is also correct, but the real meaning is this that that Divine Being had made you independent of all material needs and means and took him into the protection of His

Mercy and that He Himself look charge of his training and rise in ranks. (*Ibn Katheer*)

In the next verse it says "And did He not find you wandering and move you guidance. The meaning of this has been elucidated in the Qur'ãn itself where it says:

> "And thus have We by our Command, sent inspiration to you. You did not know before what was revelation and what was faith, But we have made the Qur'ãn a light where with We guide such of our servants as we will......" (42:52)

Then Allah says:

> "And did He not find you in need and made you independent." In this verse the spirit of the word does not merely refer to being in need of worldly needs. It means in fact that Allah had granted you that high rank of excellence that you are above all worldly and spiritual needs and endowed you with praiseworthy qualities and noble character though which you became 'independent'. It is that quality when Rasulullah ﷺ himself describes as:
>
> "The rich one is not he who has abundance of possessions. The real rich one is he who is independent of everyone save Allah."

The young Muhammad ﷺ was merely six years old when his mother Amina also passed away. She had taken him to visit his family in Yathrib (Madinah) and on the return when they reached Abwas she became ill and after a sickness of a few days passed away there. And he was a mere eight years old when his grandfather Abdul Muttalib also passed away and so in his childhood already he was deprived of care

and bringing up. It was as if the Divine Being made this announcement that he had of His own made the decision to choose him for this own care, so how should be in need of worldly means and material needs.

Allah refers to this bringing up in the unique manner:

"Have we not expanded for you your breast (for acceptance of the truth and by casting into you the real desire for knowledge of Allah and for coming to the guidance of your people) have we not removed from you your burden? Which was breaking your back.

And have we not raised your esteem (in which you are held). (94:1—4)

In this verse there is mention of the "expanding of the breast." This means that Allah had placed within him the ability to accept all the knowledge which he could gain and especially knowledge of Allah. And that he had repened opened for him all the treasures to His Knowledge and sources thereof. Having removed all the sources of ignorance, Allah then raised his esteem in the heavens and on earth, so that his position was such, that "after Allah there is none but you." Thus his name was Ahmad and Muhammad ﷺ, His position of excellence was the *Muqam-e-Mahmood*, *Surah al-Hamd* was the *Wazeefa* of his life and on the day of *Qiyamat* he will lead with the flag of hamd (praise).

Not only that. But the revolution which he brought about in this world through the Reformation brought about by the Qur'ãn and his message was such that if affected every aspect of man's life and not a person on earth could escape being affected by it in some form or another.

His Dislike of Polytheism

From the ages of his childhood until the early stages of his married life, the events of his life are written down in details in the biographies of his life. These may be checked there. In short, after the demise of his grandfather Abdul Muttalib, his uncle Abu Taalib treated him with great love and affection and thought his life Abu Taalib acted in this manner. As is the case of the Prophets (*Alaihis Salãm*) he did not load the burden of providing his sustenance on anyone else. And in his worldly life he used to be a shepherd, also engaged in business and in this regard even visited the well-known city of Basra on business trips. At the age of 25 this trip was the cause of his marriage to Khadijah. He took Khadija's commercial goods to the market in Basrah while Khadija's bondsman Maysarah accompanied him. On his return to Makkah Maysarah reported to Khadija on the honesty and trustworthiness of Muhammad ﷺ and also about the good news conveyed to them by a Christian monk and about the extraordinary amount of profit they made on this business trip. This report became the cause for the marriage bonds.

Another charge came over his life in the meantime that he experienced within himself a desire for solitude and meditation. He never found himself inclined towards bowing down before any idol. He betook himself to the cave of Hira outside Makkah for spending time there in solitude and in meditation. From the very beginning he resented the very idea of idol-worship and never did he participated in any gatherings for honouring those idols. During these periods of solitude and meditation his natural inclination was towards the worship of the One true Allah. This caused great distress in him to see how his people in particular and humanity in general had cast aside the worship of Allah and diverted

towards idol-worship. He was also greatly distressed at seeing the character of man having changed and he was thinking about the ways and means of bringing the world back towards Allah and His worship.

These were the thoughts occupying his mind as he spent days and days in the cave Hira. As he spent days there it sometimes so happened that Khadija herself used to arrive with supplies to sustain himself there or sometimes he himself came home from Hira to fetch supplies and returned to Hira to continue his meditation and worship. The result was that this same heera became the spot where Allah first revealed verses of the Qur'ān to him for his guidance In this way *Surah Iqrah* and a few verses from *Surah Muddaththir* which declared him to be a bringer of good news as well as a warner to mankind.

The Divine Mission

It has always been the system with the lives of all the Prophets (*Alaihimus Salām*) that there were two aspects to their lives. On the one hand there was the great desire to acquire knowledge of the Divine Being though silent meditation, a search for the straight and correct path and the great desire to bring about a reformation in their conditions. On the other hand like those prophets who were always noted for truthful speaking, love of truth, good relations with fellow-men, and correctness of thoughts, he had all these noble qualities and because of these qualities he was known among all the members of his community as being "the trustworthy one", so much so that the enemies who were later to reject his message had been the same ones who yesterday sang his praises.

This was his position as he reached the age of forty years. It was during the month of Ramadaan while he was in

the cave Hira when all of a sudden the Angel Jibrael appeared before him to inform him that Allah had chosen him to be the guide towards the path of guidance for all mankind and that he had been appointed as a Messenger of Allah ﷺ.

Because this incident was such that it brought about a tremendous revolution in the history of man and at the same time lifted Muhammad ﷺ to a very high rank from where the great favour of Allah could be perceived, it has been given in considerable detail by Imam Bukhari in his *Saheeh* with a report by Hazrat A'isha (*Radhiyallãhu 'anha*) in the following words:

> "Initially there came over Rasulullah ﷺ a period of true dreams. Every dream he saw was such that its interpretation proved to be true and clear, appearing like the light of morning. Then he was made to love solitude and he stayed in the cave of Hira, busy with *Ibaadah*, coming home to visit his family from time to time. The Sayidah Khadija used to prepare some supplies for him which he took with him back to the cave. And so he remained in Hira in *Ibaadah* and meditation until suddenly one day the Angel of Allah appeared unto him , who told him: "*Iqra*", ("Read"). Rasulullah ﷺ replied: "I do not know reading." The when he said this, the Angel got hold of him and held him fast onto his brought until he started feeling the pressure and then let him, go, saying: "Read!"

Again Rasulullah ﷺ said: "I am unable to read." Again he did the same as before and for the third time repeated: "Read!" Again Rasulullah ﷺ gave the same reply: "I am unable to read" Then for the fourth time the Angel recited these few verses:

"Read in the name of your Lord and Chrisher who created. Created man from a (mere) clot of congealed blood.

Read and your Lord is Most Bountiful,

He who taught (the use of) the Pen

Taught man that which he knew not."

Rasulullah ﷺ repeated these words and they became memorised on his mind. When he afterwards left the cave, it was in such a condition that his heart was trembling and as soon as he entered his house, he said: "Cover me!" Sayedah Khadija immediately covered him with a shawl. And when he later became more at ease he related to Khadija all that happened and said to her: "I fear for my self." "I fear for my life" (In other words: "I fear that I will not be able to bear the heavy burden of revelation."

But Khadijah, when she heard this, said: 'I swear by Allah. Allah will never disgrace you or degrade you. For you act kindly towards your next of Kin. You act hospitably towards your guests. You see to the needs of the poor and the helpless and make out a way for those who are distressed and help the needy."

Thereafter Khadija took him to a cousin of her name Waraqah bin Nowful. This Waraqah was one of those who during the days of ignorance had adopted Christianity, Knew the Hebrew language and used to write out copies of the Injeel. He was very old and had already become blind. She told him: "O brother, Kindly listen to the story of your nephew."

Waraqah asked for the details of the story and Rasulullah ﷺ related the incident. When Waraqah had heard it, he responded:

"This must be that Angel who brought revelation to Nabi Musa. Alas, if only I could be alive when your people will turn you out of your birth place."

Rasulullah ﷺ asked:

"Will My people turn me out of my home town?"

Waraqah replied:

"Undoubtedly so it will be. The message with where Allah had made you a messenger and whoever was ever sent to deliver that service with them it has happened Hence if that happens in my life time I will support you with all my strength."

However, Waraqah never had that opportunity as he passed away before it happened.

The First Era of Revelation

The very first verses which were revealed to Rasulullah ﷺ were the first five verses of *Surah 'Alaq*. In it was revealed the fact that Man who is the best of Allah's creation and the most highly developed is actually the vice-grent of Allah on earth. However his origin was from an insignificant and unclean clot of congealed blood. But when Allah desired to lift him to a high rank and put him on a high pedestal, he endowed him with high qualities and especially endowed him with the quality of knowledge and through the use of the pen taught him reading.

In these verses there is also an indication that according to the manner in which knowledge in acquired there are there kinds of knowledge: intellectual knowledge, tongue

knowledge and formal knowledge. The former of these is that which in its acquisition is not in need of words or drawings. However formal knowledge does stand in need of words and reading as well as the other two forms. Tongue knowledge however is not in need of words and picture but does require intellectual knowledge. Hence when there is any mention of formal knowledge, the other two forms and automatically included in it. By stating: "Taught man with the use of the pen," the Qur'ãn made reference to this fact. And for further elucidation mentioned: "Taught man what he did not know."

The Second Era of Revelation

After the initial revelation of verses in the cave of Heera, the revelation of the Qur'ãn was suspended for a time. Allah in His wisdom decided to stop the revelation for a limited time so that after the appearance of the Angel in the cave responsibility upon Rasulullah ﷺ of him having become prophet and messenger of Allah should sink into his mind properly and so that the preparedness and capability should be properly instilled in his mind, so that the new responsibility should not remain foreign to him. This suspension of revelation is called the period of 'fatrat' of revelation.

However after the initial distress caused by revelation, there came a period of ease and calm and the spiritual effects of it was so pleasurable that Rasulullah ﷺ found it difficult to be without it and this time the loss of it caused him greater distress and unrest. At various times the Angel Jibreal appeared to encourage him towards patience and calm and to re-assure him that the office of prophethood and messengorship has become connected to him and that the suspension of revelation is merely temporary. Only then did he become restful in waiting for resumption of revelation.

After that revelation was resumed and the first verses of *Surah Muddaththir* were revealed:

> "O you who are wrapped up (in a mantle).
>
> Arise and deliver your warning!
>
> And magnify your Lord
>
> And keep your garments free from any stain!
>
> And shan all abominations
>
> Nor expect in giving any increase (for yourself)
>
> But for your Lord's (Cause) be patient and constant." (74:1—7)

In these verses the object of man's life has been completed. In the first verses of *Surah al-'Alaq* it was indicated that man requires correct knowledge for him to become a true human being. Without man is nothing. Here it is stated that in spite of the great position of correct knowledge, man's position will not reach the required heights, until such time that with that correct knowledge, there is added correct actions and deeds. For if knowledge is correct but correct deeds are missing, it is not of much use and benefits are lost therefore for his proper guidance both must be present. Then man will be able to reach to the rank of a proper human being.

In other words just as in *Surah Al-'Alaq* there is an indication of the need for beneficial knowledge, there is in *Surah Muddaththir* an indication towards beneficial deeds. These verses gives an exhortation towards recognition of Allah's Lordship, towards internal and external cleanliness, towards unstained character, towards steadfastness upon righteouness, and towards acceptance of truth and towards pious deeds and patience. These are the things which should

be mixed with correct knowledge. Further this verse also indicated to Rasulullah ﷺ that this was going to be the responsibility expected of him in his new office as a messenger and in the near future will be the first priority of his divine mission.

The Announcement of His Call

In the above verses there came the first commanded "to warn his people. Thereafter there came the verses from *Surah Shu'araa* which commanded him to first of all call his family and relatives to the truth so that its effects should also reach the others and through them reach the others from the tribes of Quraish and the general Arabs. In *Surah Shu'ara* Allah commanded:

> "And admonish your nearest Kinsmen,
>
> And cover your wings to the believers who follow you.
>
> Then if they disobey you, say: "I am free (of responsibility) for what you do
>
> And put your trust on the Exalted in Might, the Merciful,
>
> who sees you standing forth in prayer and your movements
>
> among these who prostrate themselves.
>
> For it is He who hears and Knows all things."
>
> (26:214—220)

It was as if this way the next step after reached the dangers and ranks of knowledge and beneficial deeds. Now this command is given to proceed with conveying the message and inviting towards Allah. Hence biographers tell

us that he stood upon the hill of Safa and called the tribal members of Quraish together and when they had all gathered he explained to them:

> "I am Allah's messenger to you and His guide towards the straight path:"
>
> He said to them: "O people, If I should tell you that beyond this hill there lies an army ready to attack you, will you believe me?"
>
> They replied: "Yes, indeed we will believe you because we have found you to be a truthful and trustworthy one. Whatever you say will be the truth."

Then he said:

> "O people, I call you all towards the One God. And I wish to save you from idol-worship. You should fear that day when you will appear before Allah to give an account of your deeds and your character." (*Taarikh Ibn-e-Katheer*)

When this message reached the ears of Quraish, they were astonished and were quite perturbed at hearing a voice against the religion of their forefathers. Most angry of all was Rasulullah (*Sallallãhu 'alaihi wasallam*)'s own uncle Abu Lahab He exclaimed in anger: "May you perish this day. Did you call us together to tell us this?"

It is so strange that just moments before they had praised the same Muhammad ﷺ for his truth and trustworthiness and for whom they had shown such love and respect, the suddenly changed, just because he told them that he was Allah's Messenger, they turned against him, calling for his blood.

The Second Era of His Mission

One may read the books of history on his life to find out how much effort he made to call his family members and tribesman to Islãm and towards faith, and how much he tried to rectify their moral condition. But apart from a few of them Quraish refused to answer to his call. In fact they became his worst opponents and enemies. Then Allah sent him a third message:

> "O you caller towards truth! do not be affected by the rejection of your kinsmen and tribesmen and be not saddened by it, but remain steadfast on the duty that has been loaded on you because the verdict of good fortune and ill-fortune does not lie with you. Your duty is only to convey the message.
>
> Now you are commanded to spread the message beyond your family and tribal circles to Makkah and beyond Makkah to the other tribes and call them all to Islãm so that all those souls yearning for the truth may find rest and comfort and have chance for everlasting life."

The Qur'ãn says:

> "And this is a Book which we have sent down, bringing blessings, and confirming the revelation which came before it, that you may warn the mother of cities and all around her."
>
> (6:92)

And also:

> "And thus have we sent by inspiration to you an Arabic Qur'ãn that you may warn the mother of

> cities and all around her And warn them of the day of Assembly of which there is no doubt..."
> (42:07)

Therefore Rasulullah ﷺ found himself not limited to Makkah alone in conveying the message of Islãm and started conveying it to Taaif, Hunain and also to Yathrib (Madinah). In fact he went so far as to spread the message as far as Abyssinia through the Muhajireen that went there and the call of Islãm even reached Ashama, the King.

The World-wide Mission

Thereafter followed that part of his mission which was the main aim of his advent and was the one distinguishing factor between the mission of previous prophet and Muhammad ﷺ in that Allah made his mission a world-wide mission, stating that he was not only a messenger to Quraishs and not only towards the inhabitants of the *Ummat-Qur'ãn* and the surrounding areas and not only to the Arabs but to all mankind. He was sent to the blacks and the white, the Arabs and non-Arabs, but to every nation on earth. Allah says:

> "And we have not sent you but as a universal messenger to men giving them glad tidings and warning them against sin but most men do not understand." (34:28)

And further:

> "Blessed is He who sent down the criterion to His servant (Muhammad ﷺ) that it may be an admonition to all creatures."

The Speech of Hazrat Jaa'far ﷺ

Rasulullah ﷺ was born among the Arabs and naturally when the first exounded his message the first people who were addressed by him were the Arabs. It was meant that the Arabs, having become enlightened by the light of prophethood should become like a shepherd for other nations and so that they having been trained under the shadow of the prophet should become like guides for mankind and become "the best of *Ummats*."

Now it should be seen that a nation of Arabs who were such ignorant nations, devoid of culture and so deviated from good manners and character—what effect the message of Islãm had upon them so that we may easily understand that the *Deen* whose fundamental principles brought about such tremendous changes and such a major revolution which made the Muslim a spiritual person of international stature, which alone is sufficient as a proof of the truth of Islãm.

When the opposition of the polytheists of Makkah and their persecution of the Muslims forced a group of Muslims to leave Makkah and to take refuge with the Christian king of Abyssinia in the continent of Africa, Quraish sent a deputation to intercede with the king-Ashamah to refuse them asylum and to hand those refugees over to them to be returned to Makkah, because as they put it, these refugees had become renegades of their religion, having discarded the *Deen* of their fore-fathers, and having caused division among their people.

Ashamah, having listened to this demand summonsed the Muslims to his court to answer to the claims of the delegation. At that time Hazrat Jaa'far ﷺ rose in the court of the king and in concise terms he gave a short out line of their

Deen and its teachings. It is this speech which explained the revolution brought about by Islām to the age of ignorance. Addressing the court of the king, Hazrat Ja'far ؓ said:

"O King! A long and dark era had passed over us. During that period our condition was such that we cast aside the worship of Allah and worshipped idols. We used to worship the stones which we ourselves molded into idols. We were involved with eating dead animals, fornication looting and robbing others, cutting off relations with our next of kin and these were our daily activities. We never used to respect the rights of our fellow-men and we were completely unaware of justice and mercy and also unaware of what was truth and what was evil. In fact our lives were like the lives of animals where the stronger used to subdue the weaker ones and to suppress the weak was looked upon as being a special sign of superiority.

Through the Grace of Allah it so happened that Allah sent a Holy Messenger ﷺ from Himself among us of whose geneology we were quite aware, whose truthfulness, trustworthiness innocence friend and foe used to admit and acknowledge—a man whose people nicknames, "Muhammad ﷺ, the trustworthy one". He came to teach us that Allah has no partner and no likeness. He taught that God is free of partners and associates, that idol-worship is an ignorance and as such is to be discarded, and that there is no one worthy of worship except the one Allah. He taught us to follow truth and to be kind to our next of Kin, to treat the weak ones and our fellow-men with kindness. He eradicated from our lives murder and killing, declared fornication and adultery forbidden and saved us from all indecency and immorality. He taught us the difference between marriageable and non-marriageable women in marriage. He declare it prohibited to utter untruths and to unjustly devour the possessions of orphans and taught us to perform prayers to Allah and to

give charity. In fact he took us out of the ranks of animalism and made us enter into the humanity."

O King, we accepted these holy teachings and embraced this religion with our hearts and this is the fault over which this delegation has demand from you that you should hand us over to them." (*Seerat Ibn Hissam*)

When Jaafar ﷺ gave this exposition of Islãm before the king and did so with great courage, the king refused to take the Muslims out of his asytum and hand them over to the delegation. Thereafter Hazrat Jaafar ﷺ recited a few verses from *Surah Mariam* which so affected the King Najashie that tears strained from his eyes. He himself thereafter embraced Islãm at the hands of Hazrat Jaafar ﷺ.

This is the concise picture of Islãm which enlightened the darkest corner of the then known world and within a very short space of time shone like the sun. In this picture of Islãm there are dogmatic beliefs, ethics, righteous deeds which the Qur'ãn has explained in various *Surahs*. The Qur'ãn is the real guide towards these teachings.

The Isra (Maeraaj)

Isra means to travel by night. It was that unique honour granted to Rasulullah ﷺ which Allah gave him by taking him on an astonishing journey from the Masjid-ul-Haraam in Makkah to the *Masjid-ul-Aqsa* in Jerusalem and from there to the highest heavens in his natural body in order to show him some of His special signs. All this happened in one night and is called the '*Isra*.'

The word *Maeraaj* is derived from the word *Urooj* which means to ascend or to be high. Hence *Maeraj* is also called a 'stairs'. Because Rasulullah ﷺ on this night traversed through the heavens, and through the seven heavens up to the

Sidratul Muntahaa and went even to higher regions to observe the "Signs of Allah" and because he himself described the journey in his own words as "I was made to ascend" i.e., *'Urija bee'*, therefore this journey there is called the *Maeraaj*—The ascension." Some *Ulama* have made a technical difference between the two sections of the journey by stating that the portion of it towards which reference is made in the Qur'ãn in *Surah Bani Israeel* is noted to be the Israa, whereas the section of it which is mentioned in *Surah al-Najm* and in the authentic *Hadith* which Rasulullah ﷺ described as "I was made to ascend" is called the *Maeraaj*.

The Oneness of the Event

It is therefore definitely not correct to maintain that these are two separate incidents happening on different occasions. Some people have said this with the view of reconciling the two incidents because of some minor differences of opinions regarding some aspects. The well-known research scholar of Islãm Hafiz Ima-duddeen bin Katheer states: "If we join all the various reports it becomes quite clear that the *Mee'raaj* took place once only. This is the truth of the matter."

The Year of the Maeraaj

When did this unique incident take place? Although there are various opinions, there seems general consensus on two points: that *Maeraaj* took place before the *Hijrat* and secondly it took place after the demise of Hazrat Khadija. And since the *Hijrat* took place in the 13th year after the Mission, and seeing that in *Bukhari* Hazrat A'isha (*Radhiyallãhu 'anha*) declares that Hazrat Khadija died three years before the *Hijrat* and in view of a *Hadith* which states that the time of the five daily *Salaahs* becoming obligatory,

therefore the time of the *Meeraj* may easily be fixed to have taken place in the period of three years before the *Hijrat.*

Therefore it seems that those who state that the *Meeraj* took place one and a half years before the *Hijrat* seems in accordance with the reality. Then also there are various opinions as to the month in which it took place. However the most preferred view is that it was during the month of Rajab, probably the 27th night of the month. Hence Ibn Abdul Bar, Imam Nawawi and Abdul Ghani al-Maqdisi (*Rahmatullah alaih*) Among the well-known scholars of *Hadith* are inclined to that date. And the latter of them state emphatically that it was the 27th night of Rajab, stating that the whole *Ummat* have always maintained this to be the correct date.

The Qur'ãn and the Maeraaj

The Qur'ãn has mentioned the *Meeraj* in two *Surahs* i.e., *Surah Bani Israel* and *Surah al-Najm.* In *Surah Bani Israeel* mention is made of the journey from Makkah— (the Masjid al-Haraam) to Jerusalem (Masjid al-Aqsa) and in *Surah al-Najm* there is mention of the journey through the heavens. Although it is generally believed that of *Surah Bani Israeel* it is only the first verse which refers to the *Israa*, the truth is that this whole *Surah* deals with this unique event. The other verses are completion of the incident. One argument to substantiate this view is that towards the middle of the *Surah* it states: "And we have not made the vision which we showed you and the tree except as a trial for men." Which is also a reference to the *Meeraj*. Before the verse the Qur'ãn mentioned the events of Hazrat Moosa عليه السلام and Hazrat Nooh عليه السلام, their mission and conveying the message and explains how the rejectors of truth always used to reject the truth of the prophets, just as today they reject the *Meeraj.*

The Hadeeth and Proof of the Maeraaj

The well-known scholar of *Hadith* Zurqauni says that the incident of the *Meeraj* has been reported by forty five of the companions and he also mentioned all their names. Among them are *Muhajireen* and among them are also *Ansars*. It should never be believed the *Ansaar* were not present in Makkah at the time of the *Meeraj* and therefore reports by them are merely hearsay evidence, because such an important event which had much to do with the progress of Islãm and which had an important connection with the *Hijrat* that it is obvious the companions would have inquired about it directly from Rasulullah ﷺ and even if they did hear it from the *Muhaajireen*, they would surely have inquired from Rasulullah ﷺ for confirmation. Hence in this regard we read in the report by Shaddaad bin Ows:

> "We asked: "O Messenger of Allah, how did the *Meeraj* take place?" *(Tirmidhi)*

In this *Hadith* are the words: "We asked." This means that this question must have been asked in an assembly of *Sahabah* among whom must have been *Muhaajireen* and *Ansaar*.

Further in a report by Hazrat Sa'sa-'ah who was an Ansaari, it is stated: "Rasulullah ﷺ related to them (the Companions) the incident of the *Meeraj*."

(Bukhari, Kitaabul-Mee'raaj)

The Nature of the Incident

Because the incident is a long one therefore in spite of the actual incident being related through continuous authentic transmission in which the major events are all in agreement, yet the numerous reports sometimes differ with

regard to details and such differences in the different reports are easily removed by simply reconciling one version with another. However those minor differences do not have any major effect upon the actual truth of the incident, especially if we take into consideration that the Qur'ãn has with clear text declared it as being the truth, which has been denied and rejected by irreligious one's with their irreligious interpretations of this miraculous event.

The Maeraaj, Israa and the Qur'ãn

In *Surah Bani Israeel* there is mention of the Journey from Makkah to Baitul-Muqdis:

> "Glory to (Allah) who did take His servant for a night journey from the sacred mosque to the farthest mosque, whose precincts we blessed—in order that we might show him some of our signs. For He is the One who hears and sees all things." (17:01)

> We granted the vision which we showed you, but as a trial for men. (17:60)

And:

> "By the star when it goes down, your companion is neither astray nor being misled. Nor does he say (anything) of (his own) desire.
>
> It is no less than inspiration sent down to him.
>
> He was taught by one mighty in Power
>
> Endued with wisdom for he appeared (in stately form)
>
> while he was in the highest part of the horizon.
>
> Then he approached and came closer

And was at a distance of but two bow-lengths or even nearer;

So did (Allah) convey the inspiration to His servant (Conveyed) what He (meant) to convey.

The prophet's (mind and) heart in no way falsified that which he saw.

Will you them dispute with him concerning what he saw?

Near the lote-tree beyond which none may pass

Near it is the garden of Abode

Behold the lote-tree was surrounded (in mystery unspeakable).

His sigh never swerved, Nor did it go wrong.

For truly did he see of the Signs of his Lord, the greatest (53: 1—18)

The Maeraaj Incident

At this juncture there is not the opportunity to provide a full and comprehensive *Tafseer* of *Surah Bani Israeel*. We shall confine ourselves to just point out a few points, because this work is an abridge version which require conciseness.

But if one looks at the contents of the verse in *Surah Bani Israel*, it is easy to deduce that as far as the Qur'ãn is concerned the *Israa* and *Meeraj* took place during a state of wakefulness, with the natural body. If one is going to move away from this and maintain that it was a spiritual experience or a dream or vision, this interpretation will not be acceptable without far-fetched interpretations. The Qur'ãn and the authentic *Hadith* make it clear that the *Meeraj* and *Israa*

took place in the state of wakefulness and with the natural body. By way of proof we mention the following points:

1. The verse says: "Who did take his servant for a night journey." If we compare the word '*Israa*' as it was used in the Qur'ãn in the case of Nabi Moosa ﷺ and Nabi Loot ﷺ, then it is clear that the journey was in a state of wakefulness and with the natural body.

2. In the other verse it says: "the vision which we granted you." The word vision means that which was seen by the physical eye and not that which was seen in a dream or by the soul. This meaning of the word Ru'yaa is its real meaning and not its metaphorical meaning.

3. The Qur'ãn says the vision which Rasulullah ﷺ was "a trial for men." This means between *Iman* and *Kufr* and even though the spiritual observation and visions and dreams of the prophets could also be rejected by the unbelievers, but here the evident matter is that because of the greatness of the incident the rejection of the unbelievers was most rehement as Rasulullah ﷺ explained the experience as an actual experience.

4. In *Surah al-Najm* the Qur'ãn says: "The prophet (mind and) heart in no way falsified that which he saw." This verse does not refer to seeing Jibrael but is in fact a reference to the physical sighting of everything the observed with the physical eyes in the *Israa* and *Meeraj* the verse says that whatever the eyes saw was confirmed by the heart and neither did the eyes fail to see properly, nor did the heart deny what was sighted.

5. According to authentic *Hadith* we are told that in rejecting the truth of the *Meeraj* the unbelievers brought forth this argument that if Muhammad ﷺ claims to have visited Baitul Muqaddas, he should give

detailed description of the Mosque because "they were certain that he never visited Baitul Muqaddas and no having seen the Mosque he would not be able to describe it in detail. At that time all the space between Makkah and Baitul Muqaddas was removed and Rasulullah ﷺ saw the whole of Baitul Muqaddas and described it to them, including recent alterations to the structure. This shows that those unbelievers understood that Rasulullah ﷺ had observed Baitul Muqaddas in a state of wakefulness and went there with his natural body. And Rasulullah ﷺ did not rectify this as having been wrong and in fact silenced them by giving a complete description in a miraculous manner.

6. The commentator of the Qur'ãn Abdullah bin Abbaas quotes a statement from Rasulullah ﷺ that the word '*Ru'yaa*' in the verse in *Surah Bani Israeel* means "a vision with the sight of the eyes" and does not indicate a spiritual vision or a dream."

7. In the verse: "We granted the vision which we showed you, but as a trial for men, As also the cursed tree (mentioned) in the Qur'ãn."

Here is stated that the incident of the *Israa* and the tree that grows in Jahannam in the fire and not burning—these two things and their acceptance or rejection is a criterion between *Imãn* and *Kufr*. Hence if a tree with thorns growing in hell without burning and remaining green and fertile, can be something to be rejected by the unbelievers, then surely they will be even more rehement in their rejection of an incident where Rasulullah ﷺ broke down the chains and restraints of time and space and with his natural body travelled on such a journey in a state of wakefulness. Certainly they rejected it and for this reason the Qur'ãn called

it a "trial for men." After all their rejection of the spiritual observances of the prophets and their dreams were no new thing to the unbelievers.

8. When the *Meeraj* took place, the next morning Rasulullah ﷺ related the story to a gathering of Companions and all of them unanimously understood and believed that it took place with his natural body and in the state of wakefulness. They are men like Hazrat Umar ؓ, Hazrat Anas ؓ, Hazrat Abdullah bin Mas'ood ؓ etc. Then there were some others who held other views, like Hazrat Muawiya and Hazrat A'isha, but their contact with Islãm started later and they were connected to his life in Madinah. Hence preference is given to the views of those who were present in Makkah at the time of the *Mee'raaj*.

Some Details Regarding the Maeraaj

One morning Rasulullah ﷺ said: "Last night My Lord bestowed a great honour upon me. While I was asleep last night it was during one part of the night when Jibrael appeared to me and woke me up. I had not yet property woken up when I was brought to the *Haram* and the *Kabah.* There he made me lie down for a short while. First he cut open my breast and washed out the inside of my breast and filled it with *Imãn* and wisdom. Then I was brought to the door of the Haram where Jibrael offered me an animal for transport, which was slightly smaller than a mule. It was the *Burraq*, white in colour and when I ascended onto, it I saw that its speed was such that where the finthest point of ones sight, there it placed down it legs as one step. And within a moment we reached Baitul Muqaddas. There at the indication of Jibrael I tied my transport animal at a spot

where the previous prophets used to tie their animals on visiting the Masjid-al-Aqsaa.

Then I entered the Mosque and performed two *Rak'aahs Salaah*. Then from there the preparation were made for the heavenly journey first Jibrael offered me two cups, in one of them was wine and in the other was milk. I accepted the cup of milk and rejected the cup of wine. Seeing the Jibrael said: "You, by accepting the cup of milk, have chosen the natural *Deen*."

Then the journey to the heavens started. In the company of Jibrael, the Burraaq travelled towards the heavens. When we reached the first heaven, Jibrael requested the gate keeper to open the door. He replied: "Who is there?"

> Jibreal replied: "It is me, Jibrael."
>
> Then he asked: "And who is with you?"
>
> Jibreal replied: "It is Muhammad ﷺ."
>
> Then he asked: "Is he coming after having been invited by (Allah)?"
>
> Jibreal replied: "Most certainty."
>
> Then the door was opened and the Angel said: "Welcome to the visitor."
>
> When we entered we met Nabi Adam عليه السلام. Jibrael عليه السلام said to me: "This is your father Adam. Greet him."
>
> I greeted him and he answered my greeting saying: "Welcome to my righteous son and the righteous prophet."

Thereafter we reached the second heaven and here too the questioning and answering took place as happened at the

first heaven. And we entered the second heaven where we met Nabi Esa and Nabi Yahya. Jibrael introduced them to me and said to me:

> "Great them." I greeted them and they greeted me back, saying: "Welcome to the righteous brother and the righteous prophet!"

Then we went to the third heaven where the same happened and when I entered the third heaven I met Nabi Yusuf. Again Jibrael introduced me and told me to greet him. I greeted him and he responded by saying: "Welcome to the righteous brother and the righteous prophet."

Then we proceeded to the fourth heaven where after questioning and answering we entered and I met Nabi Idrees. In the fifth heaven we met Nabi Haroon. In the sixth heaven we met Nabi Musa. When we left the sixth heaven, Nabi Musa cried and I asked the reason for the crying. He replied: "I have this envy in me that Allah's wisdom has decreed that such a person should come after me whom Allah grants this honour that more of his *Ummat* will enter paradise than mine."

Thereafter after the same questioning and answers, we reached the seventh heaven. There we met Nabi Ibraheem who was sitting with his back against the Baitul-Ma'moor, wherein daily seventy thousand angels enter for worship. In response to my greeting he said:

> "Blessed are you O, my righteous son, and righteous prophet."

From there I was taken to the Sidratul-Muntaha which is a tree, of which the leaves are like the ears of an elephant.

On this journey I also saw four rivers, two of them were manifest and two were hidden. In other words two of them, the Nile and the Eraphate were visible from the heavens and two were rivers in paradise. Then I was offered two cups of milk and honey on the one side and wine on the other side. I chase the cup of milk and honey. Upon this Jibrael gave me the good news that: "You have chosen the *Deen* of nature."

Thereafter Allah declared that "Upon you and your *Ummat* fifty *Salaahs* are made compulsory in every day."

When I returned from there, I met Nabi Musa who inquired as to what had been made obligatory on me. I said: "Fifty *Salãhs*".

He said: "Your *Ummat* will not be able to bear such a burden Go back and beg for a lightening of the burden. I have already tested my *Ummat* before you."

Hence I returned to the court of Allah and from Allah's side there was a lessening of five *salaahs*. I came back to Nabi Musa ﷺ and once again he insisted that this too was too much. In this way I came and went a few times until only five *Salaahs* were left. Still Nabi Musa ﷺ was not satisfied saying: "I have a lot of experience with Bani Israel and have been busy with reforming them. Therefore I am sure your *Ummat* will not be bear such a burden. Go back and ask for more lessening of the burden."

I replied: "I have become ashamed to ask for more relief and have accepted the five daily *Salaahs*."

When I left there there was an announcement: "We have executed the duty of *Salaah* and made it compulsory. We have also granted a reduction. (In other words the decision has been taken that instead of fifty salaahs, only five need to be performed). However the reward for the five will be

similar to fifty *Salaahs*. And this reduction is as a result of our grace and favour."

In these reports of the *Mee'raaj* there is also a mention of Rasulullah ﷺ having visited paradise and hell.

Seeing Allah on the Maeraaj

Is it so that Rasulullah ﷺ on the night of *Mee'raaj* having seen Allah without there being any curtain in between. According to authentic *Hadith* the content tell us that Rasulullah ﷺ definitely did see Allah, however the manner in which he saw the Divine Being was such that it could not be described because there is in this world no way in which description could be given. But he merely mentioned the gist of having 'seen' Him. Thus in the report by Hazrat Abdullah bin Abbaas رضي الله عنه he is reported to have said: "I saw Him as *Noor*." In another place he says: "*Noor*, He is *Noor*, how can I see Him?"

The Hijrat

The word '*Hijrat*' is derived from the word '*Hajar*' which means "to leave" and in Islãm it means to leave your birth place for Allah's sake.

The Hijrat to Abyssinia

When in the early days of Islãm the Unbelievers of Makkah persecuted the Muslims to such an extent, causing them so much trouble and hardship that it became difficult for them to continue living in Makkah so that there remained no other way out but to flee from there to escape the persecution, they emborked upon the first *Hijrat* to Abyssinia.

At that time the king of Abyssinia was a Christian called Ashamah. Thus Rasulullah ﷺ gave permission for some Muslims to proceed to Abyssinia to seek refuge with him and so that they under his protection can remaking steadfast upon the *Deen* of Islãm.

The most well-known member of this group was Sayeduna Uthmaan and his wife, the daughter of Rasulullah ﷺ, Ruqayya, As Rasulullah ﷺ bid farewell to them, he said this was the first couple after Nabi Loot ﷺ and Nabi Ibraheem ﷺ who performed *Hijrat* in the path of Allah. Thereafter their number slowly increased to eighty members. Among them was Rasulullah (*Sallallãhu 'alaihi wasallam*)'s cousin Jaafar bin Abu Taalib ﷺ, who delivered such an impressive lecture on Islãm in the court of Najashi when the delegation from Quraish came to demand from the King to hand the refugees over to them.

The Causes for the Hijrat to Madinah

In the 11th year of the mission a few inhabitants from Yathrib met Rasulullah ﷺ at the time of *Hajj* at Aqabah a spot between Al-Hira and Mina and listened to his invitations to Islãm. They accepted Islãm. They were six or eight persons. The next year these and some others—a total of twelve again met him at Aqabah to discuss matters concerning Islãm and all embraced Islãm. Their names according to Muhammad bin Ishaaq ﷺ were. Abu Umama ﷺ, Ouf bin al-Haarith ﷺ, Raafi' bin Maalik ﷺ, Qatbah bin Aamir ﷺ, Muaaq bin Harth ﷺ, Zakwaan bin Abdu Qays ﷺ, Khalid bin Mukhallad ﷺ, Ubaada bin Saamit ﷺ, Abbaas bin Ubaadah ﷺ, Abu Haytham ﷺ, 'Adeem bin Saa-'idah ﷺ.

Sayeduna Ubaadah bin Saamit (*Radhiyallahu anhuma*) reports: "We embraced Islãm at the first meeting at 'Aqabah on the following conditions.

a) that we will worship none except Allah.

b) that we will not commit theft.

c) that we will not commit fornication and adultery.

d) that we will not kill our children.

e) that we will not accuse anyone falsely and not backbite each other.

f) that we will not disobey Rasulullah ﷺ at all.

After they had sworn an oath of allegiance Rasulullah ﷺ said: "If you carry out these conditions and fulfill them, then I give you the good news of entrance into paradise. And if you commit any of those evil, then your affair lies in the Hands of Allah. If he so wishes, He may pardon you and if He so wishes He may punish you.

This incident at 'Aqabah made Islãm the talk of the town all over the households of Madinah and slowly and gradu'ally Islãm entered almost every house in Madinah. The result was that in the 13th year of the mission, 83 men and two women met Rasulullah ﷺ once again at Aqabah during the next Hajj season. Rasulullah ﷺ went to 'Aqabah with his uncle, 'Abbaas, and delivered a very effective lecture on Islãm whereby their hearts started shining with the *Noor* of Islãm. Thereafter a discussion followed wherein was mentioned that if Rasulullah ﷺ should come to settle in Madinah, there is a chance that Islãm would spread faster, and the *Ansaar* would have the opportunity of being in his blessed company from among the Companions present Rasulullah ﷺ chase twelve *Naqeebs* to represent himself and to carry on the work of inviting to the path of Allah.

When Islãm had started to spread in Yathrib revelation from Allah came to Rasulullah ﷺ giving permission for the Muslim of Makkah suffering under the persecution of the Makkans to go and seek refuge among the new Muslims of Yathrib (Madinah). They were now permitted to perform *Hijrat* to Madinah, and slowly one by one they secretly left Makkah en route to Madinah. The Makkans, when they became aware of this tried to stop the *Hijrat* by increasing the persecution. However the Muslims sacrificed their possessions, their wealth and their lives to perform this *Hijrat* for the sake of Allah and their *Deen*.

Rasulullah (Sallallãhu 'alaihi wasallam)'s Hijrat

Among the well-known Muslims of Makkah only Rasulullah, Abu Bakr and Ali were left behind with only a few others. At the time Quraish decided to try and extinguish Islãm completely by killing the Messenger of Allah.

Darul Nadwa

All the leaders of the various tribes of Quraish gathered in the place which was looked upon as the seat of the government of Makkah, the Darul Nadwa, which was originally established by a forefather, Qusay bin Kilaab. During the meeting the conversation centred around the resolution to kill Muhammad ﷺ. Among the leaders present were Utbah, Shaybah, Abu Sufiyan, Ta'eemah bin 'Adee, Jubayr bin Mut'im, Harith bin 'Aamir', Nadr bin Haarith, Abul Jash-Jazee, Raf"a bin Aswad, Hakeem bin Hizaam, Abu Jahl, Munabbah bin al-Hajjaj, Umayya bin Khalaf, and others. When the consultation started a *Shaytaan*, Shaikh Najdy appeared at the door asking to participate in the discussion. Quraish, having found him to be on their side, gave him permission to

join in. Various speakers gave their opinions but every time the Shaikh Najdy declared the opinion wrong and unacceptable. At last one man gave the opinion that from every one of the tribes one man should be appointed and that these young men should all together attack Muhammad and kill him. This will make them reach their intended solution and Bani Abdul Manaaf will not have the courage to extract revenge from all the tribes. They will have to settle for blood money. The Shaikh Najdy approved of this plan and the plan was accepted by all.

That same night Hazrat Jibrael ﷺ appeared to Rasulullah ﷺ, telling him of the whole plan, also telling him to let Hazrat Ali ﷺ sleep on his bed that night while he himself should on that night begin the journey of the *Hijrat* to Madinah.

Therefore in response to that revelation in spite of the watchfulness of the young men of Quraish he managed to have walked through them, reciting some verses from *Surah Yaseen*: "And We covered them up so that they cannot see."

He also picked up a handful of dust and threw it towards their heads as he left them and proceeded to the house of Abu Bakr and there gave him the news to accompany him on this journey and then set forth in the direction of Madinah.

This journey took place on a Monday in Rabee-il-Awwal in the 13th year of the mission and this important journey in all its miraculous happenings is recorded in detail in the *Hadith* and the fact that Abu Bakr was his companion is mentioned in the Qur'ān thus:

"He had no more than one companion,

They two were in the cave

And he said to (Abu Bakr) his companion:

"Have no grief, for Allah is with us....." (9:39)

At that moment Rasulullah ﷺ addressing Abu Bakr ؓ did not say: "Have no fear" but he said: "*Laa Tahzan*" "Have no grief or sorrow". The reason is that fear is something where one fears the harmful effects and in this case it is as if the Qur'ãn states that Abu Bakr had no fear for his life or himself but his great fear was over the arrest of Rasulullah ﷺ and the sorrow it would cause him if he was to fall into the hands of the unbelievers. Rasulullah ﷺ realized this and instead of '*Laa Takhaf*' he said '*Laa Tahzan*', and by adding that "Allah is with us" he actually put a stamp upon their companionship and its acceptance by Allah.

Even if people with hatred, enmity and irreligion should try their utmost to disprove and condemn the companionship of Abu Bakr with Rasulullah ﷺ and even if they utter whatever they wish to utter, they will be unable to remove or destroy the companionship of Abu Bakr. And even if they should spend all the strength of the universe to remove it, it is not to be removed. "That is the favour of Allah which He grants to whomsoever He wishes."

The Qur'ãn and the Hijrat to Madinah

We already mentioned that the incident of *Mee'raaj* was like an introducing to the *Hijrat*. The wonderful happenings of the *Mee'raaj* was an indication to the fact that henceforth the *Tableeghi* life of Rasulullah ﷺ was taking on a new direction which was going to be more successful. Therefore it was necessary that he be made acquainted with the two *Qiblah* and with the secret of the higher regions of the Universe so that when the Makkan life was going to be exchanged for the Madinite life, the qualities of prophethood and messengership will have reach great heights so that finally he would be able to reach that stage where he would be able to utter:

> "Today I have perfected for you religion, and have fulfilled my favour upon you and I am pleased to you Islãm as a *Deen*."

Hence *Surah Israa* from the beginning till the end is connected with the *Hijrat* thus in the first verse there is mention of the *Israa*. Then follows some principles pertaining to *Hidaayat*, then in between are discussion on pervious nations and their prophets and guides with their missionary incidents, then there follows some thoughts on *Mee'raaj* which is followed by the *Du'a*:

> "*Rabbi adkhilnee mud khala sidqin Wa akhrijnee mukhraja sid-qin*"
>
> "Lord let my entrance be by the gate of truth and like wise my exit by the gate of truth."

This is the *Du'a* on leavning Makkah and on entry to Madinah. This is a reference to the *Hijrat* which continues till the end of the *Surah*.

In this way Hazrat Ibn Abbaas and Qatada have both connected the following two verses with the *Hijrat*:

> "The purpose was to scare you off the land in order to expel you But in that case they would not have stayed therein after you. Except for a little while." (17:76)

This is a grave warning to the unbelievers that when your injustices had caused the *Nabi* to flee towards Madinah your social life was also near to destruction. That means *Hijrat* was the beginning of success for Islãm and for the enemies of Islãm it was their death.

Allah also says:

> "And say: O My Lord let my entry be by the gate of truth and like wise let my exit be by the gate of truth and grant me from your side an authority to help me." (17:80)

Similarly in *Surah Anfaal* there are some references to the *Hijrat*:

> "Remember how the unbelievers plotted against you, to keep you in bonds, or slay you or get you out (of your homes). They plot and plan and Allah plans too But the best of planner is Allah." (8:30)

Similarly in *Surah Towbah* there is mention of the *Hijrat* together with the high rank of Hazrat Abu Bakr:

> "If you help not (your leader) (it is no matter) for Allah did indeed help him when the unbelievers drove him out, he had no more than one companion. They two were in the cave and he said to his companion:
>
> Have no sorrow or grief, for Allah is with us
>
> Then Allah sent down his peace upon him and strengthened him with forces which you saw not and humbled to the depths, the word of the unbelievers, but the word of Allah is exalted to the heights for Allah is Exalted in Might, Wise." (9:40)

Hijrat

In Islãm *Hijrat* is a very important obligation. We all know who beloved one's home land, his possessions, his family

and household are to any person. One looks upon these things as the means towards one's worldly comforts and the means towards living one's life. However in man's life there is a greater aim and that is to acquire the *Ma'rifat* of Allah (Knowledge) and to serve Him which is called '*Deen*' or '*Millat*'. When however the situation be comes so serious that he is not allowed to practice this *Deen* as he wishes, he sometimes becomes prepared to put aside all those worldly possessions, family and household together with his homeland in order to move to such a place where he can practise it. This is what is called '*Hijrat*'.

The Qur'ãn has on various stages referred to the importance of *hijrat* especially in the following places: 2/218, 3/194, 8/74, 9/20, 12/111, 23/58, 4/100, 12/41, 4/97.

Initially, Makkah was a *Darul Kufr* or *Darul Harb* and for this reason it was a necessary duty of Muslims to migrate to Madinah so that Muslims could in safety follow Islãm and to deliver the major aim of Islãm, i.e., 'to invite towards the good and prohibit the wrong.'—as it is also called: "lifting up and raising the world of Allah." However when in the 8th year after the *Hijrat* Makkah was conquered, and became part of the *Darul Islãm*, the obligation of *Hijrat* was terminated and it was announced: "there is no *Hijrat* after the conquest (of Makkah)."

Now in future if in any country or age the Muslims are faced with a similar situation as the early Muslim were faced with in Makkah those same rules and regulations will apply which were derived from the Qur'ãn and *Hadith* and what were deduced from these two sources and became part of Islãmic Jurisprudence and in principle there will be only one out of two things they can do i.e., to make *Jihad* on to perform *Hijrat*. It will not be permissible for them to live a life of subjugation and subservience.

When Makkah was a *Darul-Kufr* Islām gave great importance to the *Hijrat* to Madinah and the Muslims made great sacrifices in this regard to combat this obstacle. One can form an idea of this from the following quotations from the Qur'ān:

> "Those who left their homes or been driven out therefrom,
>
> Or suffered harm in My cause or fought or been stain
>
> Verily I will blot out from the their iniquities
>
> And admit them into gardens with rivers beneath
>
> A reward from the presence of Allah and from his presence is the best of rewards." (3:195)

And:

> "Those who believe, and suffer exile and strive with might and main in Allah's cause with their goods and their persons, have the highest rank in the sight of Allah.
>
> They are the people who will achieve (salvation)." (9:20)

And:

> "When the angels take the souls of those who die in sin against their souls, they say: "In what plight were you."
>
> They reply: "Weak and oppressed were we in the earth."
>
> They say: "Was not the earth of Allah specious enough for you to move yourselves away from evil?"

Such men will find their abode in hell—What an evil refuge!:

Except those who are weak and oppressed—men, women and children

Who have no means in their power nor (a guide post) to direct their way.

For these there is hope that Allah will forgive

For Allah does blot out sins and forgive again and again." (4:97—99)

Armies and Expeditions

With regard to *Jihad*, the Islãmic forces wherein Rasulullah ﷺ himself did not participate were called Syria (expeditions) and those forces of the Muslims wherein he personally participated are called *Ghazwahs* (armies).

Badr

Badr is the name of a well after which the whole valley wherein it is situated became known as Badr. It i situated on the road between Makkah and Madinah, quite nearer to Madinah. This is where the battle of Badr took place. Of all the battles mentioned in the Qur'ãn this one is the most prominent.

The Battle of Badr

The *Hijrat* to Madinah caused the unbelievers of Makkah such anger because they now saw the prophet and the muslims having left from their unbearable persecution and injustices. They now decided that any price they should try to destroy Islãm and the Muslims. Thus soon after the *Hijrat* they started some minor battles in this regard to

battles of Bawaat and the *Ghazwah* of Asheerah but these were insufficient to quench their thirst for revenge. A decisive battle had to be fought to finally destroy Islām.

For this purpose they felt it necessary that sufficient weaopens should be prepared. Further they decided that Abu Sufiyan should proceed with a caravan to Syria to buy much goods which were to be sold and the profit of the sale be used to purchase weapons. So much enthusiasm was awakened for this that practically every soul in Makkah invested some portion of his saving in this venture, so much so that an old woman even came forth to offer her small sum of capital, which she had earned through her hard labour. Finally this caravan consisting of seventy men went off to Syria under the leadership of Abu Sufiyan.

When this caravan, after having made much profit in Syria was enroute back to Makkah, having to pass near Badr, Rasulullah ﷺ got knowledge of their passing. He gathered the companions for consultations and some of them expressed the willingness to confront the caravan. Some others were not too keen to confront the caravan.

The Muslim expedition that went in pursuit of the caravan had no weapons of war with them. According to the most authentic reports they were only 313 men while at the time the Muslim population of Madinah consisted of about 1000 adult males. They only had a few swords, two or three horses, seven coats of armour and only eight camels, while at the time the Muslims in Madinah had many more weapons, horses and camels. In fact this army was not a fighting force but merely a group of devoted sons of '*Tauheed*' who set forth to try to capture the goods of the caravan which was going to be used for acquiring weapons against Islām.

When Abu Sufiyan discovered that the Muslims were in pursuit of him and the caravan, he despatched Damdam to Makkah to inform Quraish of the danger and to request help from them. When this news reached Makkah, they were filled with great anger and all the chiefs of Quraish were stirred to war. Each of them were ready to take his own army and proceed to war. They were about a thousand soldiers with sufficient swords, spears, bows and arrows and in great arrogance set forth in the direction of Badr.

In the meantime Rasulullah ﷺ when the Muslims reached the valley of Safraa appointed two young men: Busbas bin Ammer and Adee bin Za'baa to act as spices to bring news of the Caravan under Abu Sufiyan. The Muslims then passed the valley of Safraa and had reached the valley of Zafraan. When they reached there the two spies brought the news that Abu Sufiyan and the Caravan would soon be reaching Badr. They also heard that the army from Makkah, one thousand strong was on its way to fight the Muslims. When these two point of news reached the Muslims at the valley of Zafraan Rasulullah ﷺ found it necessary to once more consult with the *Sahabah*. Now the matter was a serious one.

The Muslims were without equipment and very little in number while the enemy were much more in number and well-equipped with weapons. Moreover at Aqaba an agreement was made with the *Ansaar* that for as long as Quraish or others are not going to attack Madinah, they would not be forced or obliged to go out of Madinah for war.

These were the main reason why Rasulullah ﷺ wanted to consult with the companions. He said to them: "The enemy is upon us. Now you tell me what do you want? A war to decide between truth and falsehood or do you want to attack the Caravan?"

When the Muslims heard this some of them naturally opposed the idea of waging war and felt not inclined towards it. They replied:

> "O Messenger of Allah, we did not leave Madinah with the object of going to war. That is why we are without equipment. We now too feel that we should attack the Caravan and return home."

Rasulullah ﷺ himself, disapproving of this opinion, said: "Leave the caravan. Give opinions on those people who left Makkah with the aim of attacking you."

When some people again offered an excuse, Rasulullah ﷺ repeated his previous statement. At that time the eminent Companions like Abu Bakr ﷺ, Umar ﷺ and Ali ﷺ realized that Rasulullah's ﷺ view was that a war should be fought to decide between truth and falsehood. Hence they expressed the opinion that they are at all times prepared for war. This encouraged the rest of the *Sahabah*. But even then it seemed that Rasulullah was waiting for more views. Then from among the *Ansaar* Saad bin Maaz rose and said: "O Messenger of Allah, is this an indirection of us as the *Ansaar* to give our views? Then on behalf of the *Ansaar* he gave a very impressive speech of devotion and faithfulness. Having heard the courage of the *Muhaajireen* and *Ansaar* Rasulullah (*Sallallãhu 'alaihi wasallam*)'s face shone with happiness and he said:

"Now let us more forward in the Name of Allah and take the good news for Allah has promised me that one of the two groups (the Caravan, or the Makkan army) He will deliver into my hands. And Allah's promise is the truth. And I swear by Allah that now already I see the spots where the leaders and chiefs of Quraish will be killed."

According to Saheeh Muslim, it states that when they reached Badr, Rasulullah ﷺ placed his hand on the ground and showed:

> "At this spot so and so Qurayshi will be killed and on this spot so and so will be killed."

All the commentators of the Qur'ãn are agreed that the above consultation is the one which was referred to in the Qur'ãn in *Surah Anfaal*:

> ("Spoils of war are for Allah and His Rasul).
>
> "Just as your Lord ordered you out of your house in truth
>
> Even though a party of the believes disliked it,
>
> Disputing with you concerning the truth after it was made manifest as if they were being driven to death and they (actually) saw it.
>
> Behold Allah promised you one of the two parties (of enemies)
>
> That it should be yours, you wished that the unarmed should be yours
>
> But Allah willed to justify the truth according to his words
>
> And to cut off the roots of the unbelievers."
>
> (8:5—8)
>
> That he may justify truth and prove falsehood false
>
> Distableful though it be to those in guilt."
>
> (8: 5—8)

Now the Muslims proceeded ahead till they reached near Badr, where are put up camp at the Makkan side of the

valley called the Adwatul Qaswa so that they faced the enemy. At the same time Abu Sufiyan and his caravan passed along the shore-side so that if it should be necessary they will be able to come to the aid of their army. Where the Muslims were the ground was very sandy so that bc th man and animals found it difficult to move about while w ıen the enemy was quite firm ground all the advantages were with the enemy. They were three times the number of Muslims, well-equiped with weapons and came prepared to fight and then also the ground around them quite firm with the added advantage of reinforcements from the caravan.

The Muslims on the other hand were few in number, hardly had any weapons and equipment, hardly any horses or camels, settled in a sandy spot and above all no visible hope of reinforcements. Moreover the enemy had managed to take control of the water supply.

It is quite clear that if at that moment the Muslims were left to their own minds and opinions, they would have preferred to evade fighting a battle under such circumstances. They would have preferred to postpone the battle until such a time when they were on a better footing via-a-vis the enemy. This is what some of them said at the time of consultaation in the valley of Zafraan. But because Allah had through revelation informed Rasulullah ﷺ that He had promised to grant them success against one of the two enemy groups either the caravan or the army from Makkah it was clear that this promise would only be fulfilled if they met Quraish's army in combat wherein the Muslims were to be successful. Therefore they agreed in accordance with the wishes of Rasulullah ﷺ, that in spite of being ill-equiped to fight the battle to decide the issue between truth and falsehood and decided to show their courage and spirit of sacrifice.

The Qur'ān describes the situation in its own inimitable manner:

> "If you believe in Allah and (in his hidden help) and in the revelation we sent down to our servant on the day of testing—the day of the meeting of the two forces. For Allah has power over all things. Remember you were on the hither side and they on the farther side and the caravan on lower ground then you.
>
> Even if you had made a mutual appointment to meet
>
> You would certainly have failed in the appointment.
>
> But thus you met that Allah might accomplish a matter already enacted that those who die might die after a clear sign had been given and these who lived might live after a clear sign (had been given) and verily Allah is He who hears and known (all things). (8:41—42)

And He says:

> "And Allah helped you at Badr when you were a contemplible force, then fear Allah, Thus may you show your gratitude. Remember, you said to the faithful; 'Is it not enough for you that Allah should help you with three thousand angels (specially) sent down?
>
> Yes, if you remain firm and act right, even if the enemy should rush here on you in hot haste, your Lord would help you with five thousand Angels, making a terrific onslaught.

> Allah made it but a message of hope for you and an assurance to your hearts: (in any case)
>
> There is no help except from Allah, the Exalted, the Wise.
>
> That He may cut off a fringe of the unbelievers or expose them to infamy and they should then be turned back, frustrated of their purpose."
>
> (3:123—127)

The Prayer for Help

Both armies were standing ready for battle. Rasulullah ﷺ first straight tened the lines of the Muslims and then went into a shelter which had been erected for him on the battlefield and there in utmost sincerity hand humility prayed ot Allah seeking His help:

> "O Allah, we beseech you fulfill to us your promise of help to us'.
>
> O Allah, if this day this handful of Muslims are to be defeated, then never again will you be worshipped on this earth."

Sayeduna Abu Bakr ﷺ saw and heart-rending *Du'a*, came nearer and said: "Enough, O Messenger of Allah, Allah will certainly fulfill His promise."

Help from the Unseen

1. In the end this is what happened. In view of all weakness and shortage of equipment the mere fact that any Muslim should escape from this battle alive was in itself a miracle, but unseen help from Allah's side encouraged the Muslims and made then successful. On

the battlefield of Badr a miracle unfolded as almost all the leaders of Quraish were slain and the power of *Kufr* and *Shirk* was destroyed.

What was this Unseen help? The Qur'ãn says in various verses: In the eyes of the Muslims the unbelievers were made to appear few in number so that the Muslims should not feel overwhelmed and in the eyes of the Unbelievers the Muslims appeared few like the sands in number so that they not feel overpowered and flee before fighting while they themselves appeared much more. (8:43—44)

"There has already been for you a sign in the two armies that met (in combat). One was fighting in the cause of Allah, the other resisting Allah, these saw with their own eyes, twice their number but Allah does support with His aid whom He pleases. In this is a warning for such as have eyes to see.

(3:13)

2. In answer to the *Du'as* of the Muslims, they were helped with the arrival of a thousand angels:

"Remember you employed the assistance of your Lord And He answered you: "I will assist you with a thousand angels ranks on ranks."

(8:9)

Thereafter this number was increased to three thousand:

"Remember you said to the faithful. "Is it not enough for you that Allah should help you with three thousand Angels (specially) sent down?"

(3:124)

With this came the promise also that should the enemy attack you then instead of three thousand, five thousand will be sent for your help.

"Yes, if you remain Firm, and act aright, even if the enemy should rush here on you in hot haste, your lord will help you with five thousand angels, making a terrific onslaught."

(3:125)

3. Right before the battle the Muslims were made to fall asleep for a while and when they woke up after a few minutes, they were fresh for battle:

"Remember, He covered you with a sort of drowsiness to give you calm as from Himself and He caused rain to descend on you from heaven to clean you therewith, to remove from you the stain of *Shaitaan*, to srengthen your heart and to plant your feet firmly therewith."

(8:11)

4. From the heavens rain was sent down. This made the sandy soil firm under their feet and because of the decline of the land if caused water together in a whole for their use, while the land around the enemy was rendered into a muddy plain:

"Remember your Lord inspired the Angels (with the message): "I am with you, give firmness to the believers: I will instill terror into the hearts of the unbelievers: Smite above their necks and smite all their finger trips off them." (8:12)

The Result of the Battle of Badr

Anyway the battle started and both sides showed great bravery and courage the one side called out to the other: "Is there anyone to accept the challenge to a single combat?" Thereafter the total onslaught from both sides persued. Initially the Muslims fought defensively, but after his *Du'a*,

Rasulullah ﷺ entered the battlefield reciting the words: '*Shaahatil Wujooh*' 'May their faces be disgraced. He picked up a handful of sand and stones and threw it in the direction of the enemy. Allah caused that sand to reach into the eyes of each of the unbelievers and they were troubled by it. Thereafter the Muslims went over to attacking warfare:

> "(O Muhammad ﷺ) when you threw a handful of dust, it was not your act but Allah's in order that He might test the believers."

The battle raged and it was not long before the big men of Quraish were slain and the enemy's legs were taken out from under them. They tried to flee but could not find an opportunity to flee. In this way 70 of them were killed and seventy of them were taken prisoner. Finally the rest of them fled from the battlefield.

Although the Muslims were victorious in this battle through help from Allah, still twenty-two of them were martyred.

Badr Changed the History of the World

Although historians and biographers have to admit the importance of this battle, they are also forced to admit that it was no righteous battle but it was of such importance that it destroyed the strength of Quraish for all times and opened for the Muslims the way towards raising high the word of Allah.

The Battle of Uhud

Uhud is the name of a mountain in Madinah. It is that spot where in the year 3 A.H. (625 After Christ) the second battle took place between the Muslims and Quraish, between truth and falsehood.

For the sake of taking revenge for the great defeat suffered at Badr, Abu Sufiyan proceeded from Makkah with three thousand brave soldiers in the direction of Madinah and soon put up camp at Uhud.

When Rasulullah ﷺ came to know of Abu Sufiyan's army, he consulted with the companions. The elderly and experienced companions felt there was no need to go out of Madinah to meet them, but that they should rather await the enemy while staying in Madinah. When the enemy attacks the Muslims should defend with all their power and might. They felt that with this action from the Muslim's side, Quraish will not have the courage to attack Madinah and if they do they will face a great defeat which will force them to flee in disgrace.

However the companions who did not have the opportunity of fighting at Badr, and now wished to acquire the reward of Badr, did not agree with the above view. The youth sided with them and they felt the Muslims should go out of Madinah and engage Quraish in combat. Finally, it was decided that the Muslims should meet Quraish outside Madinah.

Rasulullah ﷺ agreed with this and went into his home. While he was gone the elder men started blaming the young men for having disagreed with Rasulullah (*Sallallãhu 'alaihi wasallam*)'s inclination to meet Quraish while staying inside Madinah. Obviously this caused Rasulullah ﷺ some discomfort. In the meantime these young men were sorry for having expresses this view, so that when Rasulullah ﷺ came out of his house they expressed their sorrow and said they will agree that the Muslims should stay in Madinah. Thereupon Rasulullah ﷺ said:

> "It is not fitting for a prophet that when he had put on his weapons and prepared for battle, that he should take off those weapons before the battle between truth and falsehood had been fought. Now in the Name of Allah let us enter the field of battle."

When Rasulullah ﷺ left Madinah he had a thousand men with him. Among these were three hundred hypocrites under Abdullah bin Ubay. These hypocrites had already plotted against Islãm with the unbelievers of Makkah. In order to break the courage of the Muslims, they had decided to accompany the Muslims and then before the battle to break away from them. Apparently this was because Rasulullah ﷺ had rejected the opinion of the experienced ones and decided to accept the opinion of the younger ones. So why should they now put their lives in danger.

However the hypocrites failed in their aim because their return did not have any effect upon the rest of the *Mujahidden* and their spirit of sacrifice. In fact when outside Madinah Rasulullah ﷺ took stock of the soldiers and wanted to send back the children, one Raafi bin Khadeej who was still a young boy, stood on his toes to make him appear big so that he could be allowed to remain and fight for Islãm. His plan was successful and he was allowed to remain. Similarly when Samurah bin Jundub was turned back, he cried and said:

> "O Messenger of Allah, if Raafi can proceed into battle, why should I be excluded, when in wrestling I can beat him?"

In the end both of them were allowed to wrestle. Samurah managed to beat Raafi and both of them were allowed

to join the *Mujahideen*. However among two tribes a certain amount of lack of courage had set in but due to the great enthusiasm of the other Muslims they also took courage.

At Uhud Rasulullah ﷺ arranged the Muslim in such a way that they had mount Uhud at their backs. Upon the top of one of the mountain peaks to its side he placed fifty men with bows and arrows under the command of Abdullah bin Jubayr with this instruction that they should not leave this spot at any circumstances to avoid the enemy coming along that side to attack from the rear side.

The battle started and both sides fought with great courage. The battle had not raged for very long when the Muslims found the apprehend and the unbelievers' ranks were becoming disorganised and soon they started retreating the Muslims put them to fight. As this happened the Muslims perused them with the aim of acquiring spoils of war and as this happened the archers on the hill-top also left their positions. Their leader Abdullah bin Jubayr tried his utmost to make them stay put in accordance with Rasulullah (*Sallallãhu 'alaihi wasallam*)'s command, but they left, reckoning that Rasulullah (*Sallallãhu 'alaihi wasallam*)'s orders were for the duration of the battle. Why should they now remain when the enemy fled?

Their leaving their place created an opening for the enemy. This allowed Khalid bin Waleed to attack from that side, from their rear. This caused great distress to the Muslims and within a short while victory became changed to defeat as the Muslims were cought in between. At the time Rasulullah ﷺ had some stalwarts around him like Abu Bakr ؓ, Umar ؓ, Ali ؓ, Talha ؓ and Zubayr ؓ. One of the unbelievers threw a stone which caught Rasulullah ﷺ on the face and caused him to lose a tooth. From this blow

Rasulullah ﷺ was wounded and fell down in one of the passes. Before he could recover fully, one of the unbelievers shouted: "Muhammad ﷺ is dead."

Hearing this caused even greater disorder and disorganisation among the Muslims with great distress. However the steadfast companions continued fighting and saying that news is untrue: "Even if it should be true, what should we do as living ones! Come let us fight and give our souls."

This voice caused great courage to return to their hearts. They all turned back to battle and attacked. However by this time the whole picture of the battle had changed and Quraish, having considered themselves victors had withdrawn from the battle field. Now on seeing Rasulullah ﷺ alive the Muslims were exceedingly pleased and gathered around him. He had been wounded and was bleeding. Hazrat Ali ؓ and Fatima treated his wounds and bandaged them.

The Martyrdom of Sayeduna 'Hamza ؓ

In this battle seventy companions were martyred and many others wounded. Among the martyrs was the uncle of Rasulullah ﷺ, his close friend and devoted companion, Sayeduna Hamza ؓ, whom Rasulullah ﷺ called 'the leader of all the martyrs.'

At this battle the unbelievers acted like animals and bloodthirsty predators as they went about cutting off the noses and ears of slain, fallen Muslims and arranged themselves upon the Muslims by cutting open their bodies and removing internal organs. The wife of Abu Sufiyan, Hinda took out the liver of Sayeduna Hamza and chewed it with her teeth. Hamza was treacherously killed by a black slave,

Wahshi, whom Hinda rewarded by giving him her gold necklace.

Abu Sufiyan in showing his great pleasure at this victory, shouted alud:

> "*A'laa Habal, A'laa Hubal*" Hubal is great! Hubal is great!

Thereupon Rasulullah ﷺ told Sayeduna Umar ؓ: "Reply to him by saying:

> "*Allahu A'laa wa Ajal*", *Allahu A'laa wa Ajal.*"
>
> "Allah is greater and more exalted!"
>
> Then Abu Sufiyan said: "*Lanna Uzzaa wa laa Uzaa lakum*!"
>
> (We have Uzzaa and you have no Uzzaa).

Upon this Rasulullah ﷺ: said, "O Umar reply to him: "Allah is our protector and you have no protector."

At last Abu Sufiyan said that the following year the battle will continue at Badr and saying so he took his soldiers and left to return to Makkah.

The Qur'ãn and the Battle of Uhud

The Muslims preparing for Uhud, the hypocrites breaking away from the Muslim army, their trying to create disorder among the Muslims, how initially the Muslims were victorious in battle, with Allah's help, and how they later by acting contrary to the orders of Rasulullah ﷺ, having to face defeat, Allah consoling the Muslims at their losses—all these things the Qur'ãn had dealt with in considerable detail in *Surah al-Imraan*. Muhammad bin Ishaaq writes: "Allah has revealed seven verses with regard

to the battle of Uhud: Ibn Abi Haatim reports on the authority of Mosoor bin Maglamah that he said "I asked Abdur Rahman bin Auf": Tell me your own story about the battle of Uhud." He replied: "Read the one hundred and twenty verses of *Surah Al-Imran* and you will come to know the whole story." These verses start from here.

> "(O Prophet remember) that morning you left the household early to post the faithful at their stations for battle. And Allah hears and knows all things.
>
> Remember two of your parties meditated cowardice
>
> But Allah was their protector and in Allah showed the faithful ever put their trust."
>
> (3:121—122)
>
> "So lose not heart nor fall into despair,
>
> For you must gain mastery if you are true in faith.
>
> If a wound had touched you, be sure a similar wound have touched the others.
>
> Such days of varying fortunes we give to men and men by turns that Allah might know those that believe
>
> and that He might take to Himself from your ranks
>
> martyr witnesses to truth.
>
> And Allah loves not those who do wrong."
>
> (3:139-140)

The Battle of the Ahzaab

Among all the battles of Rasulullah ﷺ the Battle of the Ahzaab holds a special place of importance because in this battle the Muslims were confronted by all the various groups of unbelievers at the same time. In this battle all the non Muslims Arab tribes as well as their allies together with the Jews gathered together with the sole purpose of destroying the Muslims completely. In Madinah, even the hypocrites secretly supported their plans. The word 'hizb' means a group or a gang and the word 'Ahzaab' is its plural, meaning 'groups of allies'. For this reason this battle is called the Battle with the allies. And because Sayeduna Salmaan gave the opinion that a trench (*Khandaq*) should be dug between the Muslims and the unbelievers, for the first time the Muslims assorted to the diggings of a trench to keep Madinah safe against the onslaught from the enemy. Hence this battle is also called the Battle of the *Khandaq* (trench).

This battle took place in the year 5 Hijri (February 627 A.C.) when Abu Sufiyan came with an army of ten thousand to attack Madinah. Concisely the story is like this that when Rasulullah ﷺ came to know of the movements of this army, he consulted with the companions as was his fixed habit. Then Sayeduna Salmaan Faarsi said: "O Messenger of Allah, it is our custom in Persia that when such an army moves against us, we dig a trench to safeguard ourselves against the enemy to keep them out." Rasulullah ﷺ accepted this suggestion and ordered that a trench be dug and he himself got hold of a spade to dig. This was the first time in human history that Master and slave, Ruler and subject, officer and soldier, master and servant together delivered this manual labour and to see the sayyad of both worlds, standing with a spade in his hand, digging for three

days of starvation with a stone tied around his stomach to still the panges of hunger. And when a huge stone stood in the path of the diggers the matter was brought to the notice of Rasulullah and saying: "*Bismillah*," he struck the stone with his spade to break it down into pieces.

On the one side of this work force was: "We remained working for three days without tasting anything," while on the other side was the *Du'a*:

> "O Allah, there is no life except the life of the hereafter. Forgive the *Ansaar* and the *Muhajireen*."
>
> And when the devoted *Mujahideen* heard this, they exclaimed with great enthusiasm:
>
> "We are those who swore an oath of allegiance to Muhammad to perform *Jihad* in Allah's path."
>
> And when the rest of then heard this enthusiastic song, they replied: "O Allah the real goodness and righteousness is the righteousness of the hereafter.
>
> So Lord send down your blessings upon the *Ansaar* and *Muhaajireen*."

Sayeduna Barra bin 'Aazib ﷺ reports that at the Battle of the *Khandaq*, Rasulullah (*Sallallãhu 'alaihi wasallam*)'s condition was such that he used to pick up sand from here and there and removing it so much so that his body was almost completely covered in dust and sand while reciting:

> "I swear by Allah, if Allah's guidance did not guide us we would not be guided aright, neither would we have prayed and given charity.

> O Allah send down your calmness over us and keep our feet steadfast in the field of battle
>
> And those who rebel against us and attack us, when they desire to cause us a trial and temptation, we have refused.
>
> And so the companions repeated in a lord voice: "*A bay-naa*" "we have refused."

The digging of the trench lasted a few days and in this time they made arrangements of safe guarding themselves against the enemy. The enemy came and encircled the area. When the blockade had lasted twenty days, the Muslims were becoming some what worry of the siege, the treachery of the Jewish tribe Bani Quraizah and became quite troubled. At that time a soldier from among the unbelievers, Nu'aim bin Masood Nakha'ee who up to that time had not yet embraced Islãm, but whose heart had already inclined towards truth, managed to drive a wedge between Quraish and the Jews, which averted the danger of them fighting the Muslims together. It so happened that while the unbelievers more still busy with the siege and blockade, a tremendous storm which destroyed the camp of the unbelievers, broke down their tents, so that their animals scattered in all directions with complete confusion spreading in all directions, so that they lifted the siege and fled. In this manner Allah saved the Muslims from this test.

At that moment Rasulullah ﷺ remarked:

> "I have been helped and granted victory through the easterly wind and the people of Aad were destroyed by the westerly wind."

When Rasulullah ﷺ needed someone to find out news about the enemy he asked three times: "Who will do this work

for me?" And on three occasions Sayeduna Zubayr bin 'Owwaam offered himself for this task saying: "I am at your service for this duty." Then Rasulullah ﷺ said:

> "Verily every prophet has a *Lawaaree* and my *Lawaaree* (disciple) is Zubair."

And at one occasion Rasulullah ﷺ used to recite this *Du'a*:

> "O Allah, Who revealed the Book, who is quick in taking account, defeat the Allies (who attack us) O Allah defeat them and make them shake."
>
> "There is no God except Allah alone, who granted honour to His forces of Muslims and helped His servant and over powered the allies alone. And besides Him everything else will pass away."

This was that battle during which, because of their pre occupation with *Jihad*, the *Asar Salah* of Rasulullah ﷺ and the Companions became *Qadaa* and at *Maghrib* time he performed both *Salahs*. *(See Bukhari: Babul Jehad)*

The Qur'ãn and the Battle of the Ahzaab

Hazrat A'isha (*Radhiyallãhu 'anha*) reports that the following verse was revealed in connection with the battle of the *Ahzaab*:

> "Behold they came upon you from above you and from below you and behold the eyes became dim and the hearts gaped up to the throats, And you imagined various (vain) thoughts about Allah." (33:10)

Because of this battle being mentioned in it, this *Surah* has been named *Surah Ahzaab*. In the second and third *Rukoo*, this battle is mentioned:

> "O you who believe, remember the grace of Allah bestowed on you, when there came down on you hosts (to overwhole you),
>
> But we sent against them a hurricane and forces which you did not see. But Allah sees clearly all that you do." (33:9—27)

The Incident of Hudaybia

Hudaybia is situated on the road from Makkah to Jedda at a distance of about one *Manzil*. It is the name of a well and it is the place connected with the "Manifest victory" of which the Qur'ãn speaks and is also the place of the "*Bay'atur Ridwaan*"—the oath of allegiance with which Allah was well-pleased.

During the year 6 *Hijri* (February 628 A.C.) in the month of Zil-Qa'da on Monday Rasulullah ﷺ left Madinah for Makkah with the object of performing *Umrah*.

When they reached Thul Khulayfa the *Sahabah* adorned the sacrificed animals which accompanied them and there they all put on the *Ihraam* for *Umrah*. Rasulullah ﷺ also appointed a man from Bani Khuzaa'ah to proceed ahead and find out the movements and interaction of Quraish.

When the *Sahabah* reached a place called Chadeer Ashtaat, the spy came to report that Quraish had already received the news of the departure of the Muslims from Madinah and that they had already gathered all the tribes with the aim of confronting the Muslims they are adamant not to allow Rasulullah ﷺ and his companions into Makkah.

Rasulullah ﷺ then consulted with the companions as to what they should do. Abu Bakr spoke: "O Messenger of Allah we have left Madinah with the object of visiting the House of Allah. Our aim is not warfare nor fighting and killing. Therefore we should continue to move towards Makkah with the aim of visiting the House of Allah. And if anyone comes in our way to prevent that we shall be forced to fight them."

After this Rasulullah ﷺ said:

"Now let us in the Name of Allah move forward."

(*Bukhari*)

With the love for the Baitullah in them and with the joy of the prospect of again visiting the House they moved in the direction of Makkah when Rasulullah ﷺ announced: "Khalid bin Waleed ؓ with his army is awaiting your arrival at the valley of 'Ateem. Hence it is advisable to avoid that way and to move to the left of that spot so that we suddenly appear unexpectedly in front of them."

When the Muslims unexpectedly arrived on top of him, Khalid was surprised and perplexed. He quickly took his forces and returned to Makkah to inform Quraish of the arrival of the Muslims.

Finally Rasulullah ﷺ arrived on that hill after which they would arrive at Makkah and his she camel, *Qaswa*, suddenly sat down and refused to move further. The *Sahaba* tried everything to make her move but in vain. When they were tired of trying to get it to move on, they said: "It seems that Qaswa has become disobedient and obstinate."

Rasulullah ﷺ heard this and said:

"No, never, Qaswa has not become disobedient and neither is this its habit. Bul actually Allah

> has stopped her, the same Allah who once stopped the companions of the elephants."

(In other words due to the attitude of Quraish and their fighting mentality the situation has become such that a war situation has arisin.) "Hence it is Allah's desire that we should not move any further until such time that an agreement is made to uphold the sacredness of the *Kabah*."

After this Rasulullah ﷺ said: "I swear by the Being in whose Hand my life lies, that whatever He shall demand of me for the sanctity of the *Kabah*, I shall surely fulfil."

After this statement by Rasulullah ﷺ, when Qaswa was urged to stand up, she immediately rose up and went further until they reached the plain of Hudaybia. There it was decided that Sayeduna Uthmaan ؓ be sent to Makkah to engage in talks with Quraish to explain that their aim in arriving there was just to visit the *Baitullah* for *Umrah*, and to explain that Quraish should not prevent that.

Hazrat Uthman ؓ went to Makkah and went to talk to Abu Sufyaan and others. None of them were inclined to listen to his plea. They said:

> "If you so wish you may perform *Tawaaf*, but we will most definitely not allow Muhammad ﷺ and his other companions into Makkah."

Sayeduna Uthman ؓ responded:

> "This I will never do. How can I perform *Tawaaf* and *Umrah* without Rasulullah ﷺ being allowed to do so?"

When Quraish saw had adamant Uthmaan ؓ was they stopped him from returning out of Makkah.

The Bay'atur Ridwaan

The news reached the Muslims that Sayeduna Uthmaan ﷺ had been killed in Makkah. This news was greatly disturbing to the Muslims and filled them with great distress. Rasulullah sat down under a tree' and took an oath of allegiance from all the *Sahabah* that each of them was prepared to die rather than to turn their backs and flee. After the oath of allegiance each of those *Sahabah* was filled with overwhelming excitement and passion, which was so great that news of it reached right into Makkah. The Makkans became greatly worried and fearful and quickly sent back the news that the rumour of the death of Uthmaan ﷺ was untrue and that he was safe and sound. Soon Sayeduna Uthmaan ﷺ arrived back among the Muslims.

Because the Muslims took this oath of allegiance for performing *Jihad* with all the enthusiasm in the world and because through this oath of allegiance they showed their great sacrificial spirit Allah in the Qur'ãn praised them for their actions and exhibited His great pleasure at them and His satisfaction with them and through this appreciation of their deed, and made it an eternal living monument to them. This oath of allegiance taken at Hudaybia has in history been called "the *Bay'atur Ridwaan*"

Allah says in *Surah al-Fath*:

> "Allah's good pleasure was on the believers when they sware fealty to you under the tree. He knew what was in their hearts and He sent down tranquility to them and He rewarded them with a speedy victory." (48:18)

The great enthusiasm of the Muslims made such an impression upon the unbelievers of Makkah that they inclined

towards peace and taking steps in this direction despatched Suhail bin Ammer as their envoy to Rasulullah ﷺ to draw up a treaty of peace in order to end this part of the story. However one major condition was that the Muslims were not to enter Makkah this time, but would be allowed to enter the following year for *Umrah*.

The Peace Agreement and Treaty

When Suhail bin Ammer arrived at the camp of the Muslims, Rasulullah ﷺ approved of the idea of a treaty of peace between the Muslims and the unbelievers and after a long discussion the treaty, was drawn up with agreement on the following points:

1. The Muslims were to return with out having entered Makkah.

2. They were to enter Makkah the following year for *Umrah* and apart from person weapons for safety they would not be allowed to carry with them weapons of war. Their swords were to remain within their sheatsh. For three days they will be allowed to remain in Makkah and far as long as they will remain their, the men of Quraish will leave Makkah and take to the mountains around the town.

3. During the course of this agreement both sides will live in peace and safety and be allowed to go about their ways in peace.

4. If in future in Makkah someone should leave Makkah without the permission of his guardian and come to Madinah, the Muslims will have to send him back to Makkah. And if in Madinah someone should leave the town and join up with the non-Muslims in Makkah there is no obligation on them to send him back.

5. All the tribes will be free to join any of the two sides as an ally;
6. This agreement between the two sides will last for ten years and none of the two sides should go against the point of agreement.

At the time of writing down the agreement Suhail had an objection against the use of the word 'Rasulullah ﷺ—the Messenger of Allah.

Rasulullah ﷺ responded by saying, "whether you agree or not, that is the fact. However our major aim here is to make peace and if you do not like this then I will not insist upon it being written down."

Then he told the writer of the treaty, Hazrat Ali, to remove the word. But how could Ali rub something like that out? When Rasulullah ﷺ realized this he asked for the place where the word is written and with his own hand in scratched it out.

When the agreement was finally finished, the Muslims felt that that they have had to give in too much and weakened their portion.

Sayeduna Umar ؓ was one of those who were most disappointed and due to the great enthusiasm for the cause of Islām he came to Rasulullah ﷺ and said: "O Messenger of Allah, is this incident of Hudaybia a victory?"

Rasulullah ﷺ replied:

"Yes, by Allah, it is a victory."

(Futhul Bari)

This incident at Hudaybia which on the outside appeared on if it was a defeat and a humiliation, how can it be a victory?

Read the reply of the eminent scholar and *hadith* expert, Imam Zuhry: "Of all the victories and conquests of Islãm, the first one that has been called "the manifest victory" is the treaty of Hudaybia. Up to that time at various times battles had taken place between the Muslims and the unbelievers and since this treaty was drawn up a period of peace and security arrived whereby a period came along wherein both parties could talk to each other and views could be exchanged. The result was that any person who examined Islãm with his sound mind and pondered over it, had no other way out but to accept its truth and embrace it. (Thus in the next two years for as long as the treaty remained valid and until such time as the unbelievers broke it). So many people embraced Islãm as did not happen before that time.

(*Fathul Bari*)

Hafiz bin Hajar Asqalani writes: "At this place the term "manifest victory" refers to the treaty of Hudaybia. Actually this 'manifest victory' opened the door for the 'Conquest of Makkah'. This is so because when the danger of war was asserted and a period of peace and calmness was brought about, a period arrived when going and coming between Makkah and Madinah took place without fear and danger. It was during this period that statewarts like Khalid bin Waleed ؓ and Ammer bin al-'Aas ؓ embraced Islãm and these things slowly but surely led to the conquest of Makkah.

(*Fathul Bari*)

He further writes in confirming the views of Ibn Hishaam and Imam Zuhri: "Confirmation of the opinion of Imam Zuhry lies in the fact at Hudaybia Rasulullah ﷺ had 1400 men with him. And when he left for the conquest of Makkah, he had ten thousand soldiers at his disposal."

(*Fathul Bari*)

The Great Victory

During Ramadaan of the year 8 Hijri (630 A.D.) the conquest of Makkah took place.

At the treaty of Hudaybia it had been decided that all Arab tribes had the right to decide for themselves whom they wanted to join as an ally either the Muslims or the unbelievers of Makkah. They had the right to decide on joining either Rasulullah ﷺ in Madinah or Quraish in Makkah.

Soon after the signing of this treaty the tribe of Khuzaa'ah announced that they had joined the Muslims whereas they tribe of Bani Bakr announced that they had joined Quraish as an ally. And so it happened.

For roughly a year and a half this situation continued, but then after one and a half years the situation changed. Since many years in the past Banu Khuzaa'ah and Banu Bakr had been at logger heads and involved in fighting. Then for some time this war like situation had ended. But suddenly war again broke out and one night Banu Bakr attacked Bani Khuzaa'ah at a place called Zaneerah. When Quraish came to know of this, they held consultations and decided that it was night time and the Muslims (as the ally of Banu Khuzaa'ah) are very far away Now was the time to take revenge against Khuzaa'ah for having become the ally of the Muslims. Hence Quraish together with Bani Bakr attacked Khuzaa'ah.

When Ammar bin Saalim saw this, he took a delegation and proceeded to Madinah to complain to Rasulullah ﷺ and sought help, explaining the painful story of what took place with Bani Khuzaa'ah. Rasulullah ﷺ said: "I swear by Allah, whatever I wish to ward off from myself, I shall endeavour to save you from it."

When Quraish heard of this, they were frightened and were sorry over their actions and they ordered Abu Sufyaan to go to Madinah and try to still the anger of the Muslims and to state that Quraish is prepared to renew the treaty of Hudaybia and to extend the time period thereof. Abu Sufyaan came to Madinah and first of all entered the house of his daughter Ummu Habeebah, who was one of the wives of Rasulullah ﷺ. When he desired to sit down on the bed of Rasulullah ﷺ which was lying spread out, Umme Habeebah quickly folded it up and said: "Father, this is the bed of Allah's Messenger."

Abu Sufyaan replied:

"So what is wrong? I am your father."

Umme Habeebah replied: "That is true, but you are an unbeliever and this is the clean bed of Allah's Messenger."

Abu Sufyaan left from there, murmuring his dissatisfaction, However this incident managed to open his eyes and he understood certain things. Abu Sufyaan appeared in front of Rasulullah ﷺ who asked him: "What is the need for this renewal and confirmation of the treaty? Has any new situation arisen."

He replied: "No, nothing new has transpired."

Then Rasulullah ﷺ said:

"You may be at ease. We are still bound by the articles of the treaty and stand by it."

Abu Sufyaan heard this but was not completely at ease because he knew that he had spoken an untruth and he had reckoned that by deceiving Rasulullah ﷺ he would reach his objective. But the reply of Rasulullah did not make him

to reach that objective. Thereafter he went to speak to Abu Bakr ﷺ, Umar and Ali individually, desiring that by these talks the objective of Quraish would be accomplished after they had broken the treaty. But he was unable to reach his objective and returned to Makkah.

Rasulullah ﷺ told Abu Bakr the truth of What had transpired and his aim.

Abu Bakr responded:

> "But O Messenger of Allah there is a treaty of peace between Quraish and us?"

Rasulullah ﷺ replied: "That is true, but Quraish themselves broke the agreement." Now the Muslims started preparing for *Jihad*, but generally no one could have noticed in which direction Rasulullah ﷺ intended to proceed. A message was sent to the areas surrounding Madinah that whosoever has faith in Allah and His Rasul should gather in Madinah by Ramadan. Every effort was made that the movements and intentions of the Muslims should come to the knowledge of Quraish because Rasulullah (*Sallallãhu 'alaihi wasallam*)'s heart's desire was that no battle should take place in Makkah and it was his hope that Quraish would become so overawed and frightened that they would willingly become obedient and surrender without any battle. But then an incident took place.

The Incident Concerning Haatib bin Balta'a' ﷺ

Sayeduna Haatib bin Balta'a ﷺ was one of the companions who had participated in the Battle of Badr. While Rasulullah ﷺ was trying to keep it a secret that his next *Jehad* was to be against Makkah, he, thinking that his family

members were in Makkah, and thinking that Quraish would in any case come to know of the intention of the Muslims, it would not be to the detriment of the Muslims if he should inform Quraish of the Muslims' intentions. He reckoned that by this he would gain some favour with Quraish, who will reciprocate by being lenient with his family and thereby keep his family safe against any harm from them. Therefore he wrote a letter to the unbelievers of Makkah to inform them.

In the meantime Rasulullah ﷺ came to know of this through revelation and he sent Hazrat Ali رضي الله عنه, Miqdaa رضي الله عنه and Zubayr رضي الله عنه to proceed to a place Rowdatu Khakh where they will find a woman travelling on a camel, who will have a letter with her. This woman was a spy. These *Sahabah* were to intercept the letter.

When these Sahaba arrived at Rowdatu Khaakh, they found this woman. They demanded the letter and she refused to hand it over, saying she had no such letter. However after they had searched her and threatened her she was forced to extract the note from his hair and handed it over.

When the note was present to Rasulullah ﷺ he found that this was the letter sent by Haatib bin Balta'a. Rasulullah ﷺ told him: "Haatib, what is this?"

Haatib replied: "O Messenger of Allah, do not be hasty. I wrote this letter knowing that all the *Muhaajreen* in Madinah have some sort of connections with the people of Makkah. And I am the only one who has no such contacts. I just thought that the Muslims would suffer no real harm but it is possible that I will somehow win the sympathy of Quraish and thereby be able to safeguard my family in Makkah against any harm. O Messenger of Allah I most definitely did not do this with the *Niyyat* of apostasy of in

sympathy with *Kufr*. I am still a devoted and sincere Muslim, steadfast on Islãm."

Having heard this Rasulullah ﷺ said: "Haatib have spoken the truth in your presence."

Sayeduna Umar ﷺ said: "O Messenger of Allah give me permission that I may cut off his head."

Rasulullah ﷺ replied: "Haatib is a *Mujaahid* of Badr and Allah has announced with regard to the veterans of Badr." "Do as you wish for I have pardoned you."

As a result of this incident of Haatib, this verse was revealed:

> "O you who believe take not my enemies and yours as friends (or protectors) offering them you love, even though they have rejected the truth that has come to you.
>
> And have on the contrary driven out the prophet and yourselves (from your homes) simply because you believe in Allah your Lord. If you have come out to strive in My way and to seek my good pleasure (take them not as friends) holding secret converse of love (and friendship) with them: for I know full well what you conceal and all that you reveal. And any of you that does this has strayed from the straight path." (60:01)

In any case it was in the beginning of *Ramadan* when Rasulullah ﷺ left Madinah with a force of ten thousand devoted companions in the direction of Makkah. When he reached between Qadeed and 'Asfaan Rasulullah ﷺ saw that the Muslims were having grant difficulty coming with the fast of Ramadan. He asked for some water and drunk it in

front of the companions so that they could see him breaking his fast and realize that there was permission for breaking the fast in the event of one being on a journey especially during *Jehad*. This is the meaning of the Qur'ãnic verse dealing with this issue.

During this journey Rasulullah (*Sallallãhu 'alaihi wasallam*)'s uncle Abbaas ﷺ embraced Islãm and came to Rasulullah ﷺ who advised him to send his household members to Madinah while he remained with the Muslims.

When the army reached near Makkah, Abu Sufyaan secretly came to find out the truth about the army. But suddenly the Muslims came upon him, arrested him and brought him to Rasulullah ﷺ; Rasulullah ﷺ looked at him with an eyes of mercy, pardoned him and set him free. When he experienced this type of character from Rasulullah ﷺ, Abu Sufyaan quickly embraced Islãm. So impressed was he at the mercy shown by the *Nabi*. Similarly Abdullah bin Abi Umayya ﷺ also became a devoted follower of Islãm and coming into the presence of Rasulullah ﷺ who said: "There is no charge against you this day. May Allah pardon your faults. He is the Most Merciful of all Merciful ones." (6:92)

Rasulullah ﷺ told Sayeduna Abbaas ﷺ:

> "Do not allow Abu Sufyaan to return to Makkah yet. Take him to the mountain over there so that he can see the strength and splednaour of the Muslim army."

Sayeduna Abbaas ﷺ and Abu Sufyaan stood on the mountain and inspected the Muslim army while the various tribes of the *Ansaar* and *Muhajireen* with their different flags were passing by. Seeing them like this made a great impression upon Abu Sufyaan. As one of the tribes passed

by, Sayeduna Saa'd bin Ubaadah, the flag bearer on seeing Abu Sufyaan, exclaimed:

> "Today is the day of war. Today at the *Kabah* war will be permissible."

This made the natural tribal prejudice in Abu Sufyaan he awakened and he said to Sayeduna Abbaas ﷺ: "O Abbaas, May your day of war be blessed." When the whole army had passed by, at last came Rasulullah ﷺ with a small group of devoted. The flag bearer was Sayeduna Zubayr who was walking in front. When Abu Sufyaan saw Rasulullah ﷺ passing he went to him and told him of the words spoken by Saa'd bin Ubaadah. Rasulullah ﷺ heard him and responded thus: "Saa'ad has spoken an untruth. Today is that day on which the sacredness of the *Kabah* will be uppermost and today the *Kabah* shall be dressed in a special covering."

Sayings this Rasulullah ﷺ took the flag from Saa'd and handed it to his son.

Then Rasulullah ﷺ commanded Khalid bin Waleed ﷺ to enter Makkah from the lower side and not to kill anybody. "However if anyone should attack you, then you may defend yourself." Rasulullah ﷺ himself led the entrance into Makkah from the higher area. Some tribes proved an obstacle in Khalid's way and some fighting took place during which some enemies were killed. However Rasulullah ﷺ entered Makkah without any obstacles or hindrance. *(Bukhari)*

When a short while earlier Sayeduna Abbaas ﷺ brought Abu Sufyaan to Rasulullah ﷺ to embrace Islãm, he had also requested: "O Messenger of Allah, there is some pride in Abu Sufyaan and (if at the conquest of Makkah) he can have an office or position of some honour and greatness, it will be great."

Thereupon Rasulullah ﷺ said:

> "Whosoever enters the house of Abu Sufyaan
> he will have safety and immunity."

Hence when Rasulullah ﷺ entered Makkah in full dignity and splendour this announcement was made."

1. Whosoever remains seated in his house with doors closed, for him will be immunity.
2. Whosoever takes refuge in the house of Abu Sufyaan, for him will be immunity.
3. Whosoever takes refuge in the *Masjid-el-Haraam* for him will be immunity.

However in spite of this general amnesty a few persons were exempted from this amnesty, men who had done Islãm great harm and caused the Muslims much trouble. Most of them had by then gone underground or had already fled away. Later they came out and benefited by the general pardon as they embraced Islãm.

Rasulullah ﷺ entered Makkah in such a manner that his banne was white in colour and the flag was black. On his head he had a black turban and entered while reciting: *Inna Fatah-naa laka fat-haa mubeenaa.*

"Verily we have granted you a manifest victory."

He was reciting and repeating these words over and over. And such was his humility and devotion before Allah that while sitting on his camel his face almost touched the back of the animal.

Breaking the Idols

When he entered the Masjid-el-Haraam he first of all ordered that all the idols be removed from it and all the pictures which were drawn against the walls should be rubbed out. When the idols were removed from out of the *Kabah* they came upon a picture of Nabi Ibraheem ﷺ and Ismaeel ﷺ with an arrow of bamboo in the hand. Rasulullah ﷺ said: "May Allah strike these polytheists! They knew that these two holy persons were completely free of such things."

Rasulullah ﷺ then performed *Tawaaf* of the *Kabah* and then went to stand in front of the idols and with a stick scratched at them as he recited: "Truth has come and falsehood has vanished. Falsehood is (by its nature) bound to perish."

Muhammad ﷺ as the Mercy to all the Universe

When the *Kabah* had been cleansed of all the idols, Rasulullah ﷺ entered the *Kabah* and walking around in all its corners loudly reciting *Takbeer* and performed voluntary prayers inside the *Kabah*. Then he came out and performed *Salah* at the *Musalla* of Ibraheem ﷺ.

When Rasulullah ﷺ and the *Sahabah* were performing *Wudhu*, the unbelievers were greatly surprised and astnonished that at this conquest there was no exultation and celebration neither arrogance nor pride but all the time there was exhibition of adornation, and servitude to Allah and every one of the *Mujahids* were only too eager to scrue Allah. The unbelievers realized that this was not the conquest of a 'King' but something else. (*Tarika Ibn Katheer*)

When Rasulullah ﷺ finished his *Salah* Hazrat Ali ؓ said: "O Messenger of Allah, grant us the two services (of the *Kabah* and its guest) it *Hijaabat* (supervision of the *Kabah*)

and *Siqau'yat* (supplying water to the pilgrims) and grant the key of the *Kabah* to us."

However, Rasulullah ﷺ did not respond to this plea of Hazrat Ali ؓ inspite of his repeated requests and he himself repeated: "Where is Uthmaan bin Talha?"

When Uthmaan bin Talha appeared, Rasulullah ﷺ handed the key of the Kaaba to him and said: "Take this key of yours. This day is the day of goodness and fulfilling of a promise."

Note: This Uthmaan bin Talha is the one who at the time of requesting the key of the Kaaba did not hand it to Rasulullah ﷺ, However the Rasul was not one to take revenge. Therefore Rasulullah ﷺ allowed the keeping of the key of the *Kabah* to remain an honour to keep it. This family until today are the supervisors of the *Kabah*. Hazrat Uthmaan bin Talha ؓ belonged to the tribe of Banu Shaybah.

Now everyone was waiting to see what was going to be done to those who had for many years caused the Muslims endless troubles, and caused them much pain, discomfort and distress. What was the *Rasul* going to do to them.

Rasulullah ﷺ ordered that all the Quraish captives and prisoners should be brought before him and when that was done, he said: "O you group of Quraish, what is your opinion as to how I will act towards you this day?"

They replied: "We have the hope of goodness from you."

Thereupon he said: "Go, you are all set free."

When this announcement was made not only Quraish but everyone with any amount of insight and intelligence could understand that there was one major difference between a king and a prophet. A prophet never gives any importance to taking revenge and personal enmity against him and his anger is never based upon his own desires. If a

prophet is caused so much injury and trouble, that it becomes unbearable and the causer of that injury and pain then begs for pardon or forgiveness, he will most certainly experience the granting of pardon and will see the exhibition of high character. Hence it so happened that when the opponents were brought him, trembling with fear Rasulullah ﷺ in a sweet voice announced: "Do not worry and be not disressed. I am not a king. I am the son of a dried meat-eating woman of Quraish."

The result of this general pardon was that the leaders of Quraish came forward with great eagerness and enthusiasm to embrace Islãm. In this way Sayeduna Muawiya ﷺ and Abu Qahafa ﷺ the father of Abu Bakr ﷺ on this day entered Islãm.

Rasulullah (Sallallãhu 'alaihi wasallam)'s Khutbat at the Conquest

At the conquest of Makkah Rasulullah ﷺ also gave a *Khutba* wherein he stated some such things which are the basis of many things in Islãm. A few important announcements were made:

1. Muslim and a non-Muslim cannot be an inheritor in the estatic from one another.
2. In any dispute between two parties it is the duty of the complainant to produce the proof and witnesses to his claim and in the absence of any witnesses the plaintiff is obliged to swear an oath.
3. It is not permissible for any women to undertaken a journey which is a long as three days travelling (by Camel or horse) without the presence of a near relative to accompany her.

4. After *Fajar Salah* and after *Asar Salah* no voluntary prayers may be performed and on the days of *Eidul Fitr* and *Eidul Adhaa* it is not permissible to fast.

5. "O people of Quraish, undoubtedly Allah has prohibited the arrogance of the days of Ignorance and your boasting about your fore fathers and your geneology. Be aware of the fact that all Mankind is from Adam ﷺ and he was created from the earth." "O people we have created you from one male and female and made you into families and tribes that you may know one another. Verily the most honoured of you in the sight of Allah is he who is most pious and righteous. Verily Allah is the Knower and Aware of everything." (49:13)

The Conquest of Makkah and the Qur'ãn

Allah has referred to the conquest of Makkah in *Surah Fath*, *Surah Hadeed* and *Surah Nasr*. In *Surah Fath* the Qur'ãn states:

> "Not equal among you are those who spend (freely) and fought before the victory (with those who did so later).
>
> Those are higher in rank than those who spend (freely) and fought afterwards.
>
> But to all Allah has promised a goodly reward." (57:10)

In *Surah Nasr* it says:

> "When comes the help of Allah and victory,
>
> And you see the people enter the Religion in crowds......." (110:1)

Here there is a general concensus that the "Victory" referred to is the conquest of Makkah.

Hafiz bin Hajar reports on the authority of Imam Sha'by:

"In '*Inna Fatahnaa laka Fat-ham Mubeenaa*' the victory referred to is the treaty of Hudaybia and in the verse thereafter where it states: '*Faja'ala min doon thaalika fat'ha Qareebaa*' the reference is also to the fruits and results of that treaty. In the victory mentioned in *Surah Nasr* the reference by general consensus of the Scholars is to the conquest of Makkah" and he then writes:

> "With regard to the meaning and objective of these verses and the various opinions as to which of the two events they refer to i.e. the treaty of Hudaybia or the Coquest of Makkah, these differences are completely removed and reconciliation brought about by the statement of Imam Sha'by.

After hearing looked at the verses of *Surah Fath*, *Hadeed* and *Nasr* and the various opinions as to what incident they refer to and after reading Imam Sha'by's reconciliatory statement and Ibn Hajar's confirmation thereof, we state that in these verse the reference is to an event which started with *Jihad* and ended in such a victory where after the land of Hijaz was cleansed of all polytheism, and idol worship. It is clear that these things came about after the conquest of Makkah. However there is also no doubt in the fact that the treaty of Hudaybia and the time of the revelation of *Surah Fateh* and the wording of *Surah Al-Fateh* gives the impression that the treaty of Hudaybia because of its results and what was to follow makes it clear that the treaty of Hudaybia is indeed also a great victory.

The Battle of Hunain (Hunain)

After the "great victory" the unbelievers of Arabia saw their power almost completely destroyed and the Arab tribes started entering into Aslam, group after group. Seeing this made two tribes becomes stirred into action by their ardour of the *Jahiliyya* days. They just could not tolerate to see the rise of Islãm.

The leaders of the tribes of Huwaazeen and Banu Thaqeef hold a meeting wherein they discussed that Muhammad ﷺ having overwhelmed his greatest enemy is now at east. This would be an apportunity for them to take a chance against the Muslims and attack them and defeat them through an unexpected attack. Both parties agreed to this and they appointed Maalik bin Owf al-Nadry as their king and decided to give rent to their feelings of jealousy and hate against the Muslims. Maalik bin 'Owf organised with other tribes to join up with them in their efforts.

When Rasulullah ﷺ came to know of these plans he gathered the companions for consultation and they decided to defend themselves against these plans by moving in the direction of Hunain. At this time the Muslim army had grown to a total of twelve thousand men of which ten thousand consisted of *Muhajireen* and *Ansaar* from Madinah whereas two thousand were from among these in Makkah who embraced Islãm since the conquest of Makkah, whereas about eighty were those unbelievers who in spite of not having embraced Islãm but having noticed the manner in which Rasulullah ﷺ treated others had of their own selves decided to join the Muslim army.

On 10th Shawwaal of the year 8 A. Hijra (February 630) the Muslim army moved in the direction of Hunain under the leadership of Rasulullah ﷺ. When he arranged the battle lines

of the Muslim Rasulullah ﷺ handed the standard of the *Muhajireen* into the hands of Hazrat Ali and handed the standard the tribe of Khazraj of the *Ansaar* into the hands of Janaab bin Munzir and the standard of the tribe of Ows in the hands of Usayd bin Hudayr and so also handed the standards of the various tribes into the hands of their leaders. Rasulullah ﷺ himself with weapons and dressed in armour and sitting on his well-known mule, lead the Muslim army.

Before any fighting had taken place the Muslim soldiers were so impressed with their large number and abundant soldiers that without mentioning '*Inshallah*', the word was uttered from the mouths of some of them that no one will this day be able to defeat them.

For a Muslim to depend on his own strength and large numbers instead of Allah's help and support is a great fault. Hence Allah dislikes this kind of pride and arrogance. Therefore Allah wished to admonish them for this. Hence at the beginning of this war with the Muslims on the attack the enemy soldiers who had hidden themselves among the hills on both sides of the Muslims, prepared to fight gorrilla warfare started raining arrows upon the Muslims from all sides. The Muslims did not expect this kind of arrows raining down towards them, hence their lines became disorganised and soon they were in complete disorder, with the result that except for Rasulullah ﷺ and the well-known companions the desert Arabs and the rest of the Madini and other tribes started fleeing.

At that time Rasulullah ﷺ bravely moved froward uttering these words:

"I am the prophet of Allah and am no imposter
I am the son of Abdul Muttalib."

> Sayeduna Abbaas ﷺ started shouting towards the fleeing soldiers:
>
> "O you from among the *Ansaar*! O you who participated in the Bay-'atur Ridwaan!!

On hearing this call from Hazrat Abbaas ﷺ which was echoing around them the fleeing Muslims started feeling ashamed and turned back towards the battlefield and soon were again gathered around Rasulullah ﷺ, fighting bravely and within a short while the initial defeat was changed to a resounding victory.

Among the unbelievers of Hunain there was a certain Durayd bin Sammah who had apposed the opinion of their leader Maalik that they should take into the battle-field their wives, children and their wealth, but Maalik did not accept his opinion. Hence they brought all these things with them into the battle and now that they were defeated all these things fell into the battle and now that they were defeated all these things fell into the hands of the Muslims. This meant that after this battle all their strength was destroyed.

By this time the truth of Islãm had become quite clear to the unbelievers and their tribes but many of them still clung to the nation that material strength and well-being was considered the criterion for truth. But now having the position of Islãm in material gains, they started coming to embrace Islãm of their own accord and desire.

The Battle of Hunain and the Qur'ãn

In *Surah Tobah* the Qur'ãn deals with the Muslims being proud and arrogant over their large numbers and how Allah initially punished them with defeat in the early stages of the battle and how through the help and grace of Allah

they were subsequently victorious. The story is told in these inimitable way:

> "Assuredly Allah did help you in many battle-fields and on the day of Hunain.
>
> Behold your great number clated you, but they availed you not,
>
> the land, for all that it is wide, did constrain you and you did turn back in retreat."
>
> But Allah poured his calmness on the prophet and the believers
>
> And sent down forces which you did not see. He punished the unbelievers
>
> And thus does he reward those without faith."
>
> "Again will Allah, after this turn in mercy to whom He will
>
> For Allah is oft-forgiving, Most Merciful."
>
> (9:25—27)

The Battle of Tabook

Tabook is a very well-known city in Shaam (Syria). During the year 9 Hijri Rasulullah ﷺ received the news that the Caesar of Rome had collected a very large force of soldiers with the purpose of attacking the Muslims already a large number of greatly experienced soldiers had been gathered for this purpose.

The time was a time of great trial and test for the Muslims: In the first place the place of Tabook was far. It cost them a very long journey at the warmest part of the year over a sandy desert. But still the devoted sons of Islãm in spite of these difficulties gathered in Madinah for the battle without any fear of the difficulties.

As was the habit of Rasulullah ﷺ whenever he desired to proceed in *Jihad* he never let it be known in which direction he was going to move so that the enemy should not be aware of his movements and intentions. But this time it was a time of very hot weather while in Hijaz there was a great drought raging and moreover they had to do with a very powerful enemy force; hence this time Rasulullah ﷺ had it announced among all the tribes what the intention was so that whoever volunteered for the battle and intended to accompany the army would know what he was in for.

Financial Help

In view of the difficult time and circumstances, this was the first time that Rasulullah ﷺ encouraged the companions to supply financial support and the devoted companions eagerly supplied it. In this manner Sayeduna 'Uthmaan ؓ supplied ten thousand dinars, three hundred camels and fifty horses and for this generous donation Rasulullah ﷺ announced: "O Allah be pleased with 'Uthman ؓ for I am pleased with him."

Sayeduna Umar ؓ came for ward and brought half of all he possessed. Sayeduna Abdur Rahman bin 'Owf ؓ brought one hundred Owqiyas of gold and Sayeduna 'Aasim bin 'Adee brought ten Wasaq of dates. And so also Sayeduna Abbaas ؓ and Talha ؓ brought much money. Even the women folk donated their jewelry and a this way Sayeduna Abu Bakr ؓ offered all that he possessed when Abu Bakr brought everything he owned, Rasulullah ﷺ asked him,

"And what did you leave behind for your family."

He replied:

"I have left for them at home the name of Allah and His *Rasul.*"

When the Muslims after all these preparations set forth from Madinah in great enthusiasm and with a great spirit, the spies of Heracle, the Roman Emperor, informed him of their spirit and movements. It is so that Heracle was still busy preparing for his campaign against the Muslims and when he received the news of the great spirit and enthusiasm of the Muslims, he lost his courage and knowing the great spirit among the Muslims he left Tabook even before the Muslims reached there.

Rasulullah ﷺ reached Tabook and found them gone. Hence Rasulullah ﷺ after drawing up some agreements with some Christian tribes in the area returned back to Madinah successfully.

Excuses of those who Failed to Accompany

When Rasulullah ﷺ was back in Madinah the *Munafiqeen* (hypocrites) who had failed to participate in difficulties of Tabook came along and offered various excuses for their non-participation and in the interest of the well-being of the structure of Islãmic Society Rasulullah ﷺ accepted their excuses and pardoned them. However among those who did not participate in the expedition there were also three sincere and upright Muslims viz., Kaa'b bin Maalik ؓ, Hilal bin Umayyah ؓ, and Muraarah bin Rabee' ؓ. Although the *Munafiqs* had brought lies as excuses, these three did not. They came forth and told the truth saying, that they could also have told lies and have had it accepted but realized that such a lie would have been told to Allah's

Messenger and Allah would have known the true situation. "The truth was that we were deprived of *Jihad* through our own laziness. Everyday I had the idea that tomorrow I will finish my work in my orchard and set forth after the Muslim army and join up with them after one or two manzils. I kept on procrastinating until finally the army came back and I was deprived of having set forth in *Jehad*. Now, O Messenger of Allah, what ever you command will be with regard to my punishment, we are prepared to accept."

This was the excuse of Kaa'b bin Maalik and the same was uttered by Hilal and Muraarah.

Social Boycott

All three persons were devoted and sincere Muslims and complete lovers of Rasulullah ﷺ and thus they could not be treated in the same manner as the hypocrites were treated. Hence it was necessary that such a punishment be meeted out so that in future it would be a warning to other Muslims not to do something similar. Rasulullah ﷺ said to them:

> "You have spoken the truth. Now go and await Allah's judgement in your regard."

All three of them went home and Rasulullah ﷺ ordered the other Muslims not to speak to them and not to great them. And every Muslim started a social boycott against them.

Complete Obedience to Rasulullah ﷺ

Sayeduna Kaab reports:

> "The effect of this boycott had upon us could not have been worse. My two companions were so affected by it that they refused to leave their

homes. However I continue to attend the Mosque for the daily *Salahs.* When I attended the mosque, I used to greet Rasulullah ﷺ any looked to see if there was any response from his side but to my great misfortune. I noticed no response. However I noticed that when I was making *Salah*, he used to look at me, but when I finished *Salah* and looked at him, he turned away from me."

"During this whole period the Muslims remained dutifully steadfast to the order of Rasulullah ﷺ in spite of friendship with us. It can be gauged from this that having become tired of the manner I was treated by them, I one day went to meet my best friend and my cousin, Abu Qatadaa, who up to that time had always been prepared to give up his life or to endanger it for my sake, and had always been a devoted friend with much love for me. I went to him and greated him but by Allah he never replied to my greeting. Seeing this, I became agitated and said: "O Abu Qatada, I swear to you by Allah, do you not know that I love Allah and His *Rasul*."

Once again Abu Qatada remained silent. I repeated my statement but again he remained silent. When for the third time I repeated my statement, he only said: "Allah and His *Rasul* know best."

Hearing this, I could no longer restrain myself and tears strained to my eyes and I said: "*Allahu Akbar.*"

The matter did not end there. After forty days had passed, Rasulullah ﷺ gave the order that the wives of the

three should also boycott them and separate from them. Hence the wives in spite of their love for their husbands left their homes and returned to their father's houses. The wife of Hilaal went to Rasulullah ﷺ and said: "O Messenger of Allah, Hilaal is an old man and I am the only one serving him there is no one else but me. If he should be deprived of my service I fear he may perish. What order do you give?"

Rasulullah ﷺ said: "Continue to serve him, but otherwise cut off all relations." Hearing this she accepted the order.

It is a wonderful example of obedience to the orders of Rasulullah!! In spite of the relationship between husband and wife and between one relative and another, but not for a minute were they prepared to disregard the order of 'Rasulullah ﷺ. *Allahu Akbar*! This is true obedience and surrender to his will.

The Love for Rasulullah ﷺ

The boycott against Kaab bin Maalik which lasted continuously for over forty days was carried out diligently by not only other Muslims, but especially by his close friends and relatives and even his wife. Everyone of them had fully surrendered to the order of Rasulullah ﷺ so much so that the earth was narrowed down around Kaa'b and in great distress he was walking around the markets of Madinah when suddenly he heard a Syrian man asking people to bring him in contact with Kaab bin Maalik.

People showed him where Kaab was walking and pointed him out to them. The man handed him a latter. When Kaa'b read it he found it was a letter from the king of Ghassan in which was written: "We have heard that your master, (Muhammad ﷺ) had treated you greatly unjustly. God had

not created a person like yourself for such humiliation. Hence you are invited to come to us speedly. We will afford you with honour and respect." (*Fathul Bari*)

Kaab reports:

> "When I read the letter, I became very sad and I said to myself: "This test is even worse than the first test. That the king of Ghassan should have the idea that I will have become so disillusioned with Allah and His *Rasul* and will leave them to come towards him!! That is a very painful situation. In any case at this despicable effort of the king of Ghassaan, I became very angry that I drew near to where a fire was burning and threw the letter into the fire and said to Nabati from Syria: "This is the reply from my side to the letter from your king."
>
> I then thought by myself: "What is this? That even the unbelievers should have the courage to want to involve me in their dirty plans?"

"The social boycott lasted for fifty days and we were not released from our predicament and although in Allah's words the earth is wide and expansive, it had become very narrow around us. Then one morning from the hill of Sulah a voice called out to me: "O Kaab, good news to you!" At that time I was expecting a change in the situation and realised that from Allah's side there must be a sign of the acceptance of our repentance. I was so glad that I immediately fell into prostration before Allah.

In groups people came towards me, informing me of the good news of the acceptance of our repentance. The very

person who up to yesterday had been strangers to me now appeared like a very close and devoted companion and even my wife came to congratulate me.

The first men who related to me the acceptance of my *Toubah* was a person in horseback. Out of the extreme joy and pleasure, I took off the clothes I was wearing and gave it to him as a present. Allah be praised that at the time I had no other clothes. Hence I was forced to borrow same other clothes to wear. Then I went into the presence of Rasulullah ﷺ, Along the way people were standing in lines to congretulate me. When I reached Rasulullah ﷺ he came forward and shook hands with me and congratulated me. He looked so happy that his face was shining with pleasure and smiled as he said: "On this blessed day receive the glad-tidings. Since your day of birth no better day has passed over you."

I replied:

"O Messenger of Allah! Is this acceptance of my repentance from your side or from Allah's side?"

He replied:

"It is not from my side. It is from Allah's side."

Sayings this his face was as shining as the shining moon and in my extreme pleasure said: "O messenger of Allah, one aspect of the acceptance of my repentance is this that I donate all my possessions in the path of Allah.

Rasulullah ﷺ replied:

"It will be better if you keep some part there of for yourself."

I replied:

"The portion of my possessions which I received from Khaybar, that I keep for myself."

I also said:

"All this is the result of truth that today I am favoured with this great favour. Hence I today make this oath that for as long as I live that I will not to resort to any words except that which is the truth."

Kaab says:

"My other two companions experienced the same joy and happiness after the period of extreme sadness and distress. Rasulullah ﷺ then recited the verses which Allah had revealed about our affair.

The Acceptance of Repentance

Allah says in *Surah Towbah*:

"Allah turned with favour to the Prophet, the *Muhajireen* and *Ansaar* who followed him in a time of distress.

After that the hearts of a part of them had nearly survived (from duty), but He turned to them (also) for He is to them most kind, most merciful.

(He turned in mercy also)

To the three who were left behind; (they felt guilty) to such a degree that the earth seemed constrained to them for all its spaciousness

And their very souls seemed straightened to them—

And they perceived there is no fleeing from Allah (but to Himself)

Then He turned to them that they might repent.

For Allah is oft-returning, Most Merciful."

O you who believe, fear Allah and be with those who are true (in word and the deed)."

(9:117—119)

The Qur'ãn and the Battle of Tabook

The Qur'ãn also mentions the Battle of Tabook and mentions many of its details to emphasize its importance. In this manner it provided adequate advice and admonition for the Muslims. Thus in the same *Surah* from the 6th *Rukoo* up to the end of the *Surah* there is mention of this battle.

Important Battles and their Results

Battle of Badr

1. Defeat and victory are not dependent on number of soldiers, but only depends on Allah's favours and help.
2. The group who enters the battlefield with a feeling of duty and with justice will never be unsuccessful and they will have the message of Allah's help with them.
3. It is only natural that a person should have a fear for this own life. This is not some thing over which one is blameworthy and Allah will surely from His side grant stead-fastness.

Battle of Uhud

1. *Jihad* is a very good test to distinguish between a sincere Muslim and a hypocrite.
2. It is the duty of an *Ameer*, *Khaleefa* and their successors to consult with the Muslims in important matters and in the end the decision taken by concensus or by consulting opinion should be acted upon.
3. In all matters in general and especially in *Jihad*, order and organisation is of utmost importance. If this is not prevalent in any community or group then the person who is the bearer of the truth among them finds it difficult to attain success and victory.
4. In the field of *Jihad* it is of the utmost importance to keep the hypocrisy and the walk ones separate. This is best and very necessary.

Battle of Ahzaab

1. This battle was a great and unequalled exposition of brotherhood and equality between human beings.
2. In every age it is not against Islãm to adopt the inventions of the age and to utilize them for the service of Islãm is not deviation. This is in fact a very good service to Islãm on condition that these means are not in principle against the fundamentals of Islãm.
3. *Jihad* is such an important part of Islãm and is such an important duty for the preservation of the *Deen* and was so important that being busy with it caused the *Salah* of *Asar* of Rasulullah ﷺ and the *Sahaabah* was left unperformed and they had to perform it after *Maghrib*. This was so although it was stressed that even at times of *Jihad* one should not be unmindful

of *Salah* an even though the Qur'ãn had bought the institution of *Salatul-Khowf* to further stress the importance of *Salah*.

4. In battle it is right to adopt such methods where in such ugly matters as untruths and failure to fulfill promises to cause the enemy to suffer losses and defeat without any fighting.

Conquest of Makkah

1. When the Muslims has a treaty with non-Muslims, then for the duration of the period of the agreement the Muslims should carry out the stipulations of the agreement. This is their Islãmic duty. However if the other party breaks the agreement the Muslims are not bound by the agreement any more.

2. The special feature of the conquest of Makkah is this that on the day of the conquest when the Muslims had full strength, but in spite of that it took place without bloodshed.

3. If one wishes to see the difference between a worldly king and a prophet of Allah, then the conquest of Makkah is a shining example.

4. If a *Kafir* or unbelieving group wishes to become an ally of the Muslims then for the sake of the benefits of Islãm and the Muslims one can make them allies. Infact in some cases it becomes very necessary to accept them as allies.

Battle of Hunain

1. Defeat and victory is not based upon the number of soldiers at one's disposal but depends upon the help of Allah.

2. If it is in the interest of Islãm and the Muslims, then in combat with a non-Muslims power it is permissible to make use of the help and co-operation of another non-Muslims power or non-Muslim group of men.

The Incident of Tabook

1. When in the interest of the benefit of Islãm a public announcement of Jihad is made, then in carrying out this duty all other duties, difficulties and obstacles become non-existant.

2. In the public announcement of *Jihad*, the supplying of financial support towards *Jihad* is an important aspect of that *Jihad*.

3. The non-participation of the *Munafiqs* (hypocrites) in *Jihad* is something beneficial, but if sincere Muslims fail to participate, then it is a crime that cannot be tolerated until such time that sincere repentance is not forthcoming.

4. In cases of open contravention of Islãmic regulations by any Muslim individual or any group of Muslims, it is permissible to institute a general social boycott against them, Infact in some serious or delicate maters such a social boycott becomes compulsory.

The Incident of Hudaybia

1. If the interest of Islãm and the Muslim Community demands it, it becomes necessary for the Muslim leader to draw up a treaty or agreement with the unbelievers, an agreement which even though on the outside appears to be point to defeat, but which if one looks at it with an eye of insight may prove to be a victory.

2. It is the duty of every Muslims at all times to look upon the regulations set forth by Allah and His Rasul as an excellent example and not to judge any mater simply on the demands of their intellect and thus go against those regulations.

3. One should believe that one who acts contrary to the agreement made will not be a man of honour in this world and neither will he be successful in the hereafter.

4. The treaty of Hudaybia shows clearly that the Muslim Nation in its character and deeds, its actions and words and in fact in its every facet of life are truthful and just, truth-loving and their individual and communal life are on a higher plane than other nations.

Zaid the Adopted Son

Among the customs of the age of Ignorance this system of adoption was one. It is a custom which is found in all countries in some form or another. Even today it is prevalent among the Hindus. It is a custom which from a genealogical point of view as well as from the point of view of the social structure of family life is rejected and also unnatural. Allah had chosen a way to bring an end to this custom.

Zaid bin Haritha

Hazrat Zaid bin Haaritha bin Shurahbil ؓ was a member of the respected Arab tribe of Bani Kalb. Because of a certain event which happened in his young days he was made a slave from his childhood, and was sold in the market in Ukhaz. Hazrat Khadija's nephew Hakeem bin Hizaam bought him for her aunt Khadija and she in turn later after becoming the wife of Rasulullah ﷺ gave him as a present to Rasulullah ﷺ. Rasulullah ﷺ set him free and made him his son and since

that time the people called him Zaid, the son of Muhammad ﷺ. It so happened that some people from Bani Kalb came to Makkah for *Hajj* and saw Zaid and recognised him. They went back home and informed his father of his whereabouts. When Zaid's father and his brother, Kaa'b came to know of his presence in Makkah they came and said to Rasulullah ﷺ: "Please hand Zaid over to us and accept a sum for his freedom."

Rasulullah ﷺ replied:

> "It is better that Zaid him self should come and that both suggestions be put before him, to choose whether he wants to return with you or whether he wishes to stay with me. And whatever will be his choice, we shall be happy with that."

Haaritha was quite pleased with this suggestion because he was sure that the son would in any case choose his father and prefer him above anyone else. Zaid was called and Rasulullah ﷺ asked him: "Do you recognize these people?" Zaid replied:

> "Of course I recognise them. This is my father and this is my uncle."

Then Rasulullah ﷺ said:

> "They have come to fetch you. You are at liberty to choose whether you want to go with them or to remain with me."

Zaid replied:

> "I cannot prefer anyone else above you, irrespective of whether it is my father or my uncle. I prefer to stay with you."

Haaritha heard this and with sadness said:

> "Zaid, what a sorry state of affairs that you choose slavery above freedom and prefer stranger above your father and uncle."

Zaid replied:

> "Whatever my eyes had seen by staying with this person, after that I consider the world and everything in it as nothing."

Then Rasulullah ﷺ announced that he had set Zaid free from slavery "Now he is not my slave, but my son."

When Haaritha heard this he was greatly pleased and father and uncle left from there completely at ease and from time to time they used to come and visit him and refreshed their eyes at seeing him.

Rasulullah ﷺ organised Zaid's marriage to Umm-e-Ayman who was his forster daughter and from this marriage Usaama bin Zaid was born. Thereafter Rasulullah ﷺ desired to have Zaid married to his aunts daughter, Zaynab binti Jahsh. This Zaynab belonged to the Hashimy family and was thus her mother Umayyah bint Abdul Muttalib apple of her eye. Zainab and her brother were not in favour of this match. But revelation from Allah came and stated that when Allah and His *Rasul* had decided something it is not right for any Muslim to disagree with it:

> "It is not fitting for a believer, man or woman that when a matter has been decided by Allah and His Messenger to have any option about their decision.
>
> If anyone disobeys Allah and His Messenger, he is clearly on a wrong path." (33:36)

After the revelation of this verse Hazrat Zaynab and her brother agreed with the match and the *Nikah* took place whereby Rasulullah ﷺ cut out the roots of genealogical pride and boasting, so that it become a living example.

Zaid's special honour lies in this that his name is clearly mentioned in the Qur'ãn. This honour did not befall any of the other *Sahabas*.

The End of Adoption

Althoug Zaid and Zainab had been joined in marriage, Zainab could not forget the fact that she was a member of the Quraish and Hashimy families while the husband Zaid was a freed slave. Similarly Zaid had this speciality that he belonged to a very respected tribe of Arabs and was also the adopted son of Rasulullah ﷺ who also had the honour of being the husband of Zainab.

Because of these opposing temperaments it was not conducive to a relationship of love and finally Zaid was inclined to *Talaaq* Hazrat Zainab. On various occasions he mention this intention to Rasulullah ﷺ but Rasulullah ﷺ felt that with the passing of time love between them will grow and thus advised him to with hold *Talaaq*.

The disagreement between Zaid and Zainab changed for the worse and finally revelation from Allah made this decision that the time had arrived for ending the custom of adoption and just as Rasulullah ﷺ first of all terminated the habit of boasting about one's geneology by ending it in his own family so also the ending of the system of adoption started with Rasulullah ﷺ himself. It happened like this: Rasulullah ﷺ was informed that when Zaid close give *Talaaq* to Zainab, then Rasulullah ﷺ was to marry her. In

this way the sorrow, which Zainab and her family felt at the marriage, would pass away and, secondly the system of adoption would be ended.

When Rasulullah ﷺ was informed through revelation of this plan, his natural indication was towards the fact that Zaid should not give *Talaaq* but hold onto his wife, then it will be better, as Zainab's family would not experience humiliation and also so that he shall remain safe from the taunts and criticism of the hypocrites and unbelievers, who will be saying: "Look, Muhammad ﷺ has made the wife of his son, his own wife, whereas he himself declared it prohibited for others to do so.

Therefore Rasulullah ﷺ continued to advise Zaid against giving *Talaaq*. However when there appeared to be no way out towards reconciliation, Zaid proceeded and issued the *Talaaq*. When the waiting period (*Iddat*) ended, the order came from Allah: "Now take Zainab to be your wife. So that in future an end should come to the system of adoption and there not be any restriction to the Muslims in marrying the wives of adopted sons, which was considered *Haraam* just like the wives of real sons."

The Revelation also indicated that whatever verdict Allah had passed will surely come to pass and Rasulullah's fears of criticism and taunts will not remove it. After all the reality is that in comparison with the Divine Decision, the judgement of society means nothing.

Allah in the Qur'ãn has dealt with the eradication of the custom of declaring a complete stranger to be your own son in two ways, firstly to deal with it on an intellectual plane and secondly terminating it practically. Intellectually it spoke against the custom in this manner."

> "And Allah has not made your adopted sons your sons such is only your manner of speech by your mouths
>
> But Allah tells you the truth and shows the (right) way."
>
> Call them by the names of their fathers, that is more just in the sight of Allah. But if you know not their fathers, call them your brothers in faith or your '*Maulas*.'" (33:3—4)

The *Sahabah* report that from that day onward they stopped calling Zaid as Ibn Muhammad and started calling him Zaid bin Haaritha.

With the purpose of ending the custom practically, the following verses were revealed:

> "Behold, you said to one who had receive the grace of Allah and your favour: "Retain in wedlock your wife and fear Allah." But you hid in your heart what Allah was about to make manifest you didst fear the people but it is more fitting to fear Allah.
>
> And when Zaid had dissolved (the marriage) with her, with the necessary (formately), We joined her in marriage to you.
>
> In order that in future there may be no difficulty to the believers in the matter of marriage with the wives of their adopted sons when the latter have dissolved with necessary formality their marriage with them. And Allah's command must be fulfilled." (33:37)

The above Qur'ãnic verses are very clear a explaining the meaning of the *masa-allah*, so much so that there is no scope for any other meaning or any contorted meaning. For this reason it seems most fitting that we should avoid looking at fabricated stories of what was supposed to have happened.

Points of Insight

Although the Messenger of Allah was fully aware of the fact that Allah's decision was fixed and not to be rejected, it is still so that when such a matter confronted him that in the light of self-structured moral rules and regulations, he would be open to criticism and scorn, then his human desire would be to safeguard himself against such matters. It is also a natural desire to expect that the objective for which that situation is to result in—that one would hope that objective could be attained in such a manner that his person would escape criticism and scorn. But when the expedience of Allah was concealed in the special circumstances, at the time when it was time to appear the *Nabi* or *Rasul* puts his personal desires aside and surrenders himself to the decision of Allah.

Banu Nadeer

The story of Banu Nadeer took place in the year 4 Hijri. Of the Jewish tribes who fled from Yemen and settled in Madinah, these Jews of Banu Nadeer was one tribe. When Rasulullah ﷺ arrived in Madinah he drew up treaties and agreements with the Jews of Madinah and around Madinah.

Although the Jews outwardly seemed in agreement with the agreements, their ancient jealousy and hatred and historical hypocrisy did not allow them to remain faithful to their agreements and they started to plot against the Muslims

secretly. In this way the chiefs of the tribe of Banu Nadeer came to Rasulullah ﷺ, stating that they wished to consult with him over a certain matter. He should come to them.

When he arrived at their place, they made him sit against a wall for the consultation. From above they had planned that a heavy stone should be dropped on him, thereby him.

So Rasulullah ﷺ, being invited went to visit them, and just as he sat down next to the wall, revelation came to him as to what their intention was. He immediately got up and left the place to return to Madinah. He then sent a message to Banu Nadeer through Muhammad bin Maslamah telling the Jews: "Because you had committed treachery and broke the agreement, hence you are ordered to depart from the land of Hijaz and proceed into exile."

When the hypocrites heard of this, they hurred to the side of Banu Nadeer and said: "You should never accept the order of Muhammad and should not leave the land. We shall stand by you at all times."

When Banu Nadeer noticed this support, they refused to move out and awaited developments. Then Rasulullah ﷺ prepared for *Jihad*. He left Abdullah bin Ummi Maktoom as *Ameer* of Madinah and set out for an attack on the fort of Banu Nadeer. Hazrat Ali was the standard bearer.

When Banu Nadeer saw this, they closed the gates of the fort and were at ease that the Muslims will not be able to cause them any harm. Rasulullah ﷺ surrounded their front for six days and then gave the order to cut down their trees which supplied them with fruit and supplied their fighters. This caused Banu Nadeer to become filled with fear and they became disappointed at not finding any support from the hypocrites. They realised that they were overwhelmed and in the end sent a message asking to be allowed to leave

Madinah and proceed into exile. This permission was granted and they were allowed to take with them all that they could load on their camels.

After acquiring the written document it was seen that the same rebels and traitors were destroying their homes so that the Muslims could not live in them. This they did in saying farewell to the place where Rasulullah ﷺ had himself made an agreement with them in the beginning that they could live there in peace and safety.

The Qur'ān and Banu Nadeer

As a result of this incident *Surah Hashr* was revealed. In it is mentioned the treachery of Banu Nadeer, the instigation by the hypocrites and the favours of Allah upon the Muslims as well as the order to cut off the fruit trees. There is also mention of the division of the spoils of war in a case where no actual fighting took place.

Lessons

1. The hypocrisy of a hypocrite is a matter of self-deceit which in the end does not prove beneficial to the hypocrite nor this to him who depends upon him and very often leads to the disgrace of the hypocrites allice and definitely leads to the everlasting destruction.

2. The people among whom iniquity and corruption and deception has become a hall-mark, of their make-up and character, in them there is destruction of the ability towards rectification of physical and spiritual aspects of their lives and consequently they do not possess any honour or respect in this world and in the hereafter there is no share of well-being for them.

3. Generally during warfare it is prohibited to cut down fruit-bearing trees and to destroy green regatation but if during the war these things are as source of strength and power for the enemy in their efforts to continue with their evil ways, then the *Mujahidden* are exempted from this prohibition. In this respect the incident of Banu Nadeer is a clear example of this exemption as in mentioned in the Qur'ãn.

False accusation against Hazrat 'A'isha (Radhiyallãhu 'anha)

In the month of Shabaan in the 5th year Hijri (December 626) the Battle against Bani Mustaliq under their chief Haarith bin Diraar took place. At that time it was common that when the hypocrites were certain of the Muslims acquiring spoils of war, they accompanied the *Mujahideen* into battle. This was because when they felt that success and victory was certain or a matter of near certainty, then for the greed of gaining spoils of war, they went with into battle. In this way the hypocrites under their leader Abdullah bin Ubay went with. On the way back a minor ancient took place. At a certain stopping place Hazrat 'A'isha, having heard the announcement to depart left the resting place to proceed a short distance away to relieve herself. When she had finished and was about to return she found her necklace which she was wearing was missing. She thought that she must have lost at the place where she relieved herself and possibly it must have broken and fallen off her. Hence she returned there to search for it. In the meantime the persons who were responsible for lifting up her *Howdaj* and placing it on the camel, picked up the *Howdaj* and placed it on the camel. Because at that time 'A'isha (*Radhiyallãhu 'anha*) was very light and weighed

very little, there those who picked up the *Howdaj* could not notice that she was not in it.

They had no idea that the *Howdaj* was empty when they lifted it up. The whole army then left that resting place.

When 'A'isha after searching for the necklace returned, she found that the whole caravan had left. She found the necklace near where the *Howdaj* was placed. On finding the caravan had departed she was greatly distressed but she thought that as soon as the Muslims discovered that she was not in the *Howdaj*, then immediately Rasulullah ﷺ will send a rider, she then thought it better to remain at that spot rather than to proceed along, walking.

It was during the latter part of the night before day break and she fell asleep sitting there.

One *Sahabī* Safwaan bin Mu'attal had been appointed to travel behind the caravan and supervise their rear, so that he may take hold of anything that may fall off from the caravan. He came along and felt that there was someone there. When he saw 'A'isha he recognised her because before the verse prescribing *Hijaab* was revealed he had seen her. Seeing her there he uttered loudly: "*Inna Lillahi wa Innaa Ilayhi Raji'oon.*"

When 'A'isha heard the voice, she woke up, drew herself together and sat up. Without speaking further Safwaan made his camel to sit down for her and she entered the *Howdaj*. Safwaan took the reins of the camel and led it along. By the afternoon they managed to catch up with the rest of the Caravan.

When Abdullah bin Ubay came to know of this, he and his hypocrite group found this an ideal opportunity to spread lies. The spread the false accusation among the caravan.

However the Muslims did not take much notice of the false accusations, except for three, (two men and one woman) i.e., Hassan bin Thaabit, Mistah bin Ithaathah and Hamna bint Jahsh. These *Sahabah* through their simplicity were caught in by the lies of the *Munaafiqeen*.

Look at Allah's favour. Not many days passed before Allah revealed the truth in the Qur'ãn, explaining the evil ways of the hypocrites, and declaring the chastity and purity of Hazrat 'A'isha and declaring that those who falsely accuse others with immorality should be struck eighty blows over their backs and such should be the punishment of the liars and fabricators of lies.

The Qur'ãn tells the Muslims clearly that you have listened to a fabricated story and accusations, why did you not on hearing the false accusations, say: "These are merely lies and a calumny!"

Says Allah:

> "Those who brought forth the lie are a body among yourselves think it not an evil to you, on the contrary it is good for you to every man among them (will come the punishment) of the sin that he earned and to him who took on him the lead
>
> Among them will be a penalty grievous.
>
> Why did not believers, men and women, when you heard of the affair—put the best construction on it in their minds, and say: "This (charge) is an obvious lie."
>
> Why did they not bring four witnesses to prove it?

When they have not brought the witnesses, such men in the sight of Allah stand forth themselves as liars!

Were it not for the grace and Mercy of Allah on you, in this world and the hereafter, a grievous penalty would have seized you in that you rushed glibly into this affair,

Behold you received it on your tongues and said out of your mouths things of which you had no knowledge

And you though it to be a light matter whole it was most serious in the sight of Allah.

And why did you not say when you heard it:

"It is not right of us to speak of this

Glory to Allah this is a most serious slander."

Allah does admonish you that you may never repeat such (conduct) if you are true believers.

And Allah makes the signs plain to you

And Allah is full of knowledge, and wisdom.

Those who love (to see) scandal published broadcast

Among the believers will have a grevious penalty in this life and in the hereafter. Allah knows and you don't know. Were it not for the Grace and Mercy of Allah on you and that Allah is full of kindness and Mercy, (you would indeed be ruined). (24:11—20)

Lessons and Admonitions

Among the lessons the Qur'ãn draws attention to from the above incident the following points are noteworthy:

1. The news given by evil persons should not be paid any attention especially when that news concerns stories regarding chaste, righteous and pious ones and regarding such news one need only say: "This is a mere fabricated lie" until such time that the bringer of that news produces solid proof of what he says.

2. To accuse an innocent person of evil and immorality is a great sin and because such an accuser transgresses one of the major rights of man he is not only a criminal as for as character is concerned but also as far society is concerned. The Qur'ãn has sentenced such an accuser and fabricator to a penalty of eighty strips over his back so that in future no one else will have the courage to do something likewise to accuse someone falsely or to spread such fabricated tales.

3. This event caused Rasulullah ﷺ much pain and distress and likewise caused the members of his household great distress. However the result was good for them in that the hypocrisy of the hypocrites was clearly shown to all and secondly for the *Ahlul Bayt* it brought great respect and an appreciation for their high position especially as far as Hazrat 'A'isha was concerned. In ten verses of Qur'ãn her innocence and her righteousness was declared.

4. Very often the accusations of the evil ones are of such a nature that simple minded and pious Muslims are taken in by their accusations and slandering. Therefore it is a duty upon the Muslims that they should not believe rumours and such tales until such time that such evidence is produced according to Islãmic law to prove the truth of allegations. Rasulullah ﷺ has said: "Avoid suspicions because very often evil suspicions is sin."

5. With regard to the rights of men, the punishments, retaliations and penalties which the Allah has declared, it does not matter whether the perpetrator is a Muslim or a non-Muslim. In the eyes of the law there is no difference between the two. Both of them are treated similarly. For this reason in the event of the false allegations against Hazrat 'A'isha (*Radhiyallãhu 'anha*) together with the hypocrites three Muslims—Hassan bin Thaabit, Mistah and Hamna binti Jahsh also has to undergo the penalty of being beaten for spreading false fabricated allegations.

The News brought by an Un Reliable One

During the year 5 Hijri after the Muslims had been victorious against Bani Mustaliq and Rasulullah ﷺ after consulting with the companions and had married the daughter of their chief Sayedah Juwayria, it so happened that due to this new relationship with the members of that tribe the rest of the companions all set their captives free. As a result of this gesture of the Muslims the whole of the tribe embrace Islãm. The result was that Rasulullah ﷺ sent once *Sahabi*, Waleed bin Uqbah ؓ to them to collect *Zakah* from the wealthy ones among them to be distributed among the poor among them.

When the members of the tribe came to know of the imminent arrival of Waleed then in order to welcome a respected person into their midst, they came out of their settlement with their goods to do so.

During the era of ignorance before the advent of Islãm there had been some enmity between Waleed and this tribe and now when from after he saw the special arrangements, he misunderstood it and was fearful of an attack and without

meeting the tribe members, turned away and returned to Madinah. There he informed Rasulullah ﷺ that Banu Mustaliq had all turned away from Islãm and became apostates, that they had refused to give *Zakah* and had become rebellions against Islãm.

Hearing this Rasulullah was greatly suddenly at the news. The Muslims too were greatly disressed and immediately prepare for *Jihad* against them to bring them back into the fold of Islãm or to punish them for their acts.

Banu Mustalik came to know of the wrong report Waleed had given about them and they too were greatly distressed and could not believe that such news could be spread about such a seadfast group of Muslims. They immediately despatched an honoured delegation to Rasulullah ﷺ to inform him of the true situation.

Now Rasulullah ﷺ was faced with the stories: On the one side was the report by the *Aamil*, Waleed and on the other side was the report given by the deputation from a newly converted tribe of people; Hence Rasulullah ﷺ hesitated in making a decision and awaited revelation from Allah to clarify the matter.

Finally Allah sent revelation to give guidance in this matter and to establish a fixed procedure of investigation to ascertain the truth:

> "O you who believe, if a wicked person comes to you with any news ascertain the truth, lest you harm people unwittingly and afterwards become full of repentance for what you have done." And know that among you is Allah's messenger. Were he in many matters to follow your wishes, you would certainly full into misfortune

But Allah has endeared the faith to you and has made it beautiful in your hearts and He has made hateful to you unbelief, wickedness and rebellion. Such indeed are these who walk in righteousness." (49:6—7)

Admonition

1. It is a general custom of this world that among civilized societies no one looks upon as being wrong to relate news received to others without making the effort to ascertain the real truth about that news, irrespective of whether that news is defaming somebody or whether it will cause harm to some individual or a group of people; whereas actually Rasulullah ﷺ has admonished the *Ummat* against that.

Abu Hurairah reports that Rasulullah ﷺ said: "It is enough as a sin that a person should relate all that he hears."

In order it is also a sin to spread any untrue word that he has heard."

2. When one hears such a thing which in terms of benefit or harm, has an effect upon the one who brings the means or upon others, then the investigation towards confirmation of it should take place before spreading it further. And when after the proof and evidence the story is proven to be true, then one should direct oneself at the results and fruits of the story.

The Tale of the Masjid-e-Zirar

Rasulullah ﷺ had come to know that the Roman King Heracle had prepared a mighty force of soldiers at Tabook, a place situated about 14 Manzil from Madinah enroute

towards Damascus and the advance guard of this army had reached as far as Balqau. Rasulullah ﷺ, in spite of a great drought which was prevailing in Arabia at the time, and in spite of the great heat at the time sent out a messenger to announce among all Muslim communities to prepare for *Jihad* against the Romans. In groups the *Mujahideen* stated gathering in Madinah for the *Jihad* while Rasulullah ﷺ was busy making preparations for *Jehad*, the hypocrites seized the opportunity for further mischief. They planned the building of a Mosque in opposition to the Mosque of Quba which after the *Hijrat* was the first Mosque erected. The idea was that people of weak Iman and those who could not reach the Masjid al-Nabawy for *Salah* could come to perform *Salah* in this mosque. The main intention was to deceive the Muslims and entire them away from Islãm and also to bring about a split in their ranks.

Thus they came to Rasulullah ﷺ and reported that they had built a Mosque for the weak ones near to their homes for the purpose of performing their *Salah* there. Now it was their desire that Rasulullah ﷺ should come along to it and perform *Salah* there at least once and it will be accepted in Allah's sight. Rasulullah ﷺ told them that he was preparing for an important *Jihad* but on his return, he will see about their invitation.

When Rasulullah ﷺ returned safely from Tabook, Allah informed him through revelation what was the actual aim of the erection of this Mosque. Hence as soon as he returned he ordered the *Sahaba* to go to that Mosque and put it on fire, burning it down.

Because this Mosque was erected not on '*Taqwa*" and not "for the sake of Allah" but for bringing about division in the Community, it was only fitting that it should be burnt down.

It was even wrong to have called it a Mosque. For this reason the Qur'ãn called it a "Mosque of Mischief."

Says Allah:

"And (Among the hypocrites) there are those who put up a Mosque by way of mischief and infidelity to disunite the believers And in preparation for one who worried against Allah and His Messenger aforetime. They will indeed sweer that their intention was nothing but good. But Allah does declare that they are liars.

Never stand therein. There is a Mosque whose foundation was laid from the first day on piety. It is more worthy of your standing (for prayer) therein. In it are men who love to be purified and Allah loves those who make themselves pure." (9:107—108)

Lessons againsg Hypocrisy

1. Hypocrisy is such a sickness which destroys all man's good qualities and good character and morals and changes his humanity into beastliness and animal nature and because there is no conformity between his thoughts and his deeds, it begins him to the lowest of the low.

2. Any specific deed can be both clean and unclean according to the intention of the doer. The deed can be good and also wicked, in according with the intention of the doer. In the way the erection of a mosque is generally a good deed and leads to reward from Allah but that is only if it is done for the sake of Allah and if the intention is to worship Allah:

> "The Mosque of Allah shall be visited and maintained by such as believe in Allah and the last day, establish regular prayers and practise regular charity and fear none except Allah It is they who are expected to be on the guidance."
> (9:18)

And this same deed can become a bad deed which is to be disliked and disapproved of when the intention is a deed of *Shaitaan* viz., to spread disunity between Muslims or if the place is to be used against the interests of Islãm or as a centre for espionage against Islãm. For this reason this deed if the hypocrites and unbelievers was unacceptable and completely rejected.

> "It is not for such as join Gods with Allah to visit or maintain the mosques of Allah while they witness against their own souls to infidelity. The works of such bear no fruit. In fire shall they dwell." (9:17)

Joining His Companion on High

Allah says:

> "Muhammad ﷺ is no more than a messenger. Many were the Messenger that passed away before him. If he died or were slain, will you then turn back on your heels?" (3:144)

Allah Allah!! What an astonishing picture it was when Rasulullah ﷺ spoke his last words: "O Allah, the Companion on high" and gave up his soul while all the companions were overwhelmed with sorrow and soul-exhausting sadness and so distressed that many of them lost their senses. At that

time Hazrat Umar ؓ, so overcome with sorrow, walked with drown sword, saying: "Whosoever says that Muhammad ﷺ is dead, his head will I cut off with this sword."

At that moment of tremendous distress Sayeduna Abu Bakr ؓ arrives on the sense and enters the room wherein Rasulullah ﷺ breathed his last and with tears flowing from sorrow bends over the body and kisses it on the forehead to emerge outside. He sees the crowd around him and sees the personality of Umar ؓ among them the same Umar ؓ who was a person unequalled in both the age of ignorance as well as in Islãm. He addresses Umar ؓ: "O Son of al-Khattab, sit down."

Umar ؓ immediately obeys and sits down. Then Abu Bakr ؓ gets onto the *Mimbar* an addresses the congregation:

> "O people, whosoever worshipped Muhammad ﷺ, know that Muhammad ﷺ has passed away. He has tasted death. And whosoever worshipped Allah, know that Allah is alive and never dies."

When these words of Umar ؓ echoed around their ears Umar ؓ and the other companions realized that Muhammad ﷺ had passed away. At this realization a calmness descended upon them and they realized that Rasulullah ﷺ having delivered the Message of Islãm, has gone to meet his "Companion on High". Now Islãm has been completed and now it is our duty to hold onto the excellent example of his and the Holy Qur'ãn and to continue to serve Islãm.

The effect this speech had upon Umar bin al-Khattab ؓ was such that he himself explains: "I swear by Allah when

the words of Abu Bakr ﷺ to explain the truth echoed around us and he recited this verse:

> "Muhammad ﷺ is no more than a Messenger.
> The Messengers before him have passed away."

At that time it appeared to me as if this verse was revealed at the time. Our love for Rasulullah ﷺ had made us dumb-struck and all of a sudden all that the Qur'ãn taught us and what our noble companion had conveyed to us came before us like the rays of the sun."

All books on *Hadith* and historical descriptions of the prophet are agreed unanimously that Rasulullah (*Sallallãhu 'alaihi wasallam*)'s death took place on a Monday in the month of Rabee-ul-Awwal. However there is no agreement upon the date of his death. The most preferred opinion is that it was on the 12th of Rabee-ul-Awwal.

Lessons

1. In *Surah Fatiha* we read: "Show us the straight way, the way of those whom you have bestowed your grace."

   And at another place in *Surah Nisaa* we read:

   > "And whosoever obeys Allah and His *Rasul*, are in the company of those on whom is the grace of Allah of the prophets, the sincere lovers of truth, the witnesses who testify, and the righteous. What is beautiful fellowship."

   These are the fellowship to which Rasulullah ﷺ referred when in the last words he said: "*Allahummar Rafeeqil-A'laa.*"

2. Death is that final decision of Allah from which none is exempted not even a *Nabi* or Messenger or the final prophet. And everlasting life is only for Allah alone.

3. The high position of Sayeduna Abu Bakr ؓ, and his special rank is also shown by the incident of Rasulullah (*Sallallãhu 'alaihi wasallam*)'s death. One can just imagine what on effect the death of Rasulullah ﷺ had upon the *Sahabah* that they seemed to lose their sense and reason. If that situation should have lasted for a longtime Islãm could have suffered great losses. However, Abu Bakr ؓ came along and saved the situation by asking control and moving them in the right direction and in this way saved Islãm from a major calamity.

"Such is the bounty of Allah which He bestows whom He will
And Allah is the Lord of the highest bounty.
(62:04)

The Seal of Prophethood and Messengership

Prophethood and Messengership which had been prevailed in this world from the era of Nabi Adam ؑ right up to Nabi Esa ؑ had been, for the sake of providing leadership and guidance, similarly all along that prophethood and messengership used to be limited to specific geographical areas. Hence it was found that various prophets used to deliver the message in various languages in these areas. Thus even through other prophet besides the lost sheep of the fold of Israel accepted the invitation of Nabi Esa ؑ, it is still quite clear that Nabi Esa ؑ never claimed to have had a universal mission. Even the Bible is clear on the fact that the people addressed by his mission was limited.

But how long could this mission remain limited to any specific group of people.'

What was awaited was the time when the world with all is wide stretches should become so connected with each other and with such a harmonious link between them that the benefit or harm to any part of it would not remain invisible and disconnected with the rest of the world, but that because of this harmonious and all-comprising connection between the various parts of the world become such that the benefits or harm that comes to any part of it has a major influence on these in other parts and what was awaited was that before this type of harmony was exhibited the universal message of salvation be prevalent in this world for the guidance of mankind torars salvation. Hence the message which appeared with the arrival of the first man on earth had evolved and progressed and became completed with the arrival of him who called 'Muhammad ﷺ' and Ahmad ﷺ.

> "This day have I perfected your religion for you completed my favour upon you.
>
> And have chosen for you Islãm as your religion." (5:03)